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Effect of Disability Awareness Program on Regular Government College in Ujjain India: An Action Research

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Abstract

Background: Regardless of devastating trend of inclusive education, students with disabilities are not being accepted by the typical developing students as well as teachers. Somehow the rejection by their peers and teachers hinder in their social inclusion, achieving academic success, and becoming more independent.

Objective: The aim of the study was to see the effect of disability awareness education program on a regular College.

Methods: This study develops and implements a disability awareness program in 8th to 12th grade students and their teachers, through action research, determines whether the program was influential in shaping attitudes towards students with disabilities. The students were exposed to 21 disabilities and more focused on Intellectual disabilities, and blindness, Hearing Impairment and accessibility. The program was designed and implemented in three steps beginning, middle and end, began with questionnaires on disability knowledge.

Result: As regard to attitude, the Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College environment became more inclusive, more welcoming environment for disabled students, and nurtured better friendships among all students. After getting knowledge about different disabilities, students without disabilities became more accepting and understanding of individual differences. The individual activities and discussions enabled students to think critically about how to deal with disabled individuals and the significance of inclusion to enhance their overall development.

Conclusion: 21 Disability awareness programs are powerful to overall environment of a Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College. These programs foster acceptance, understanding and promote knowledge about different disabilities. Therefore, disability awareness programs must be incorporated into the regular Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College curriculum and received by the all individuals to create a more accepting and positive environment for disabled students which in turn will help them to achieve emotional well being, social inclusion and academic success.

Keywords: 21 Disability awareness program, Regular Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College, Inclusion, developing thinking students, Students with disabilities.

Introduction

Inclusive education is that educational idea that all children with and without disabilities should be educated in the same schools/classrooms in their local community. Mainstreaming refers to placing students with disabilities in general education settings only when they can meet traditional academic expectations with minimal assistance (Friend & Bursuck, 2002, p.3). A student placed in mainstream setting is usually assumed to earn his or her opportunity to be placed in the regular setting by demonstrating ability to keep up with work in the classroom. The US legislation -PL 94,142 defined the concept of Least Restrictive Environment as related to educating with special needs as far as practicable in contexts that are as close to regular schooling as possible. The hardest thing for any parent to hear is that their child has a physical or mental disability. It may come as a complete shock; you may have thought that your child was just a little slower than others their age. It's no surprise that you'll be heartbroken when you find out and that heartbreak will very quickly turn to fear. You will be scared about having to care for someone for many years to come who cannot get around on their own or may have mental disability where they cannot communicate effectively. Whatever your child's disability is, you need to take one day at a time. Children with physical disabilities can quickly learn how to get around and enjoy themselves as much as a healthy child. A wheelchair or a missing arm will not deter a youngster from trying to do things and if you encourage them to be equal, do things their siblings do and encourage them to be self-sufficient, they will grow up to be able to live fruitful lives.

Enter your disabled child into a program where they can learn new things and experience new adventures. Encourage them as much as possible and avoid pity for them, this is the worst thing you can do. They don't need your pity they need love and encouragement.

If you feel like crying because you've watched your child trying to overcome an obstacle for hours, don't burst into tears.

Encourage them as much as you can and move into another room, let the tears out and return to offer more encouragement.

Inclusive education approach refers to teach to all students irrespective of their ability level in the same classroom by the same teacher through adjusting the curriculum and teaching methodologies (Gross, 2002). Inclusive environment promotes varied learning styles that support students to learn academic material as well as social skills essential for development of a range of strengths and needs (Belcher & Maich, 2011). Inclusion offers opportunities for better success both socially and academically for students with disabilities. Inclusive education play important role in changing peers and teachers attitudes in more optimistic way towards students with disabilities . Regular school with this perspective are the most effective means of combating prejudice attitudes, building friendly communities and inclusive society, and education for all. Though evidence constantly shows that being placed in an integrated education setting does not assure that students with disabilities will be acknowledged, valued and included . The inclusion of disabled students is somehow be determined by their peers attitude that may be positive or negative depends on their perception built through the knowledge. Lack of knowledge about disability has been suggested a key determinant in developing adverse attitude and social exclusion which obstructs to individuals with disability to overcome and limit one's ability to achieve success and independent .

Typically developing students' negative attitudes towards peers with disabilities have been extensively documented in varied School settings ,and recognized as a major barrier to social inclusion of disabled students in schools. Researches demonstrate that without education and sensitizing programs typical students have low empathy and acceptance of students with disabilities . Disability awareness education programs have been found as potential tool to promote knowledge, understanding, and acceptance about different disabilities , which as a consequence leads to decline of adverse attitudes towards children with disabilities.

Disability awareness programs in regular College may include wide variety of forms such as providing information about disabilities, classroom activities, simulation, literature programs, discussions, role playing, and real life stories but more successful when integrate hands-on activities representing what life with disabilities may be like Awareness training programs are not always beneficial just for students, also important for teachers and administrative staff in developing their professional development, alter their negative perception, and built more positive and inclusive environment for all students. Therefore, the present research was intended to see the effect of disability awareness educational program in Late. Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College that may help in combating the negative attitudes of peers and teachers towards students with disabilities, and creating a friendly and full inclusive environment.

Methods

Research design: Action research

This study is action research intends to be more aware of the effects of educating students about disabilities in Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College and how it would affect the overall awareness. It includes following process: 1) Selecting a focus, 2) Clarifying theories, 3) Identifying research questions, 4) Collecting data, 5) Analyzing data, 6) Reporting results, and 7) Taking informed action .

Participants

The study included total 90 participants (70 students -27 males and 43 females students ranging in ages 18-21, 12 teachers and 8 Other-staff). The selection of participants was done through convenient sampling from a regular Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College of Ghatiya Ujjain M.P. ,west-central part of India. According to inclusion criteria, students belonging to Bachelor part 1 to Part 3, and teachers and administrative staff who were willing to participate in program were included. The Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College as a whole 900 students has enrolled in Different Streams. For delivering the disability awareness program, the participants were divided into 10 groups consisting 7 students, 2 teachers & 03 other staff in each group. A team of disability professionals has led the disability awareness education program. None of the disability awareness program was offered in the Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College prior or during the time of study.

Procedure

The aim of present investigation was to study the effect of disability awareness educational program on a Regular Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College . For creating awareness among students and Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College staff, researcher has developed a disability awareness educational program. Firstly, for conducting disability awareness educational program, permission was taken from the head of the Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College . After getting permission, data was collected from Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government college, Ujjain, Inida. This study was conducted in Five steps: I)- Presenting a question paper to students and teachers to collect base line data; II)- Providing information about disability; III)- Implementation of activities; and IV)- Again distribution of the same question paper to students and teachers for collecting the data,V)- Windup the Programme.

Step I – Presenting a question paper to students and teachers to collect base line data

Giving Questionnaires were conducted at the beginning for assessing their disability knowledge, acceptance/ treatment of people with disabilities and sensitivity. Questionnaires were conducted before throughout 3 days educational period in the beginning to know the knowledge and attitude of all students regarding disability.

Step II – Providing information about disability

In this step 120 minutes lecture was delivered on different disabilities, types of disabilities or other important ideas surrounding disabilities like restrictive environment and accessibility. During lecture delivered on different 21 disability.

Step III – Implementation of activities

In third step, following activities were executed with the teachers and students:

Activity 1st : During this activity, blind fold was tied on the eyes of students and teachers, sticks were given to each in their hands and some tasks like take drinking water, fill in the glass and drink, go in surrounding and come, use steps to go up and come down were assigned to do.

Activity 2^d : During this activity, blind fold was tied on the eyes of students and teachers, Blind cricket ball were given to group and some tasks like kick the ball without seeing, follow some instruction and assigned to do.

Activity 3rd : For conducting this activity, paper and pen were given to the students and teachers and instructed them to write their own name with the help of their dominant hand, and after that write with another hand and then hold the pen in a mouth and write the same thing after that hold the pen with leg and write the same.

Activity 4th : In this activity a dance was presented by a Children's with disability to show his capability.

Activity 5th : For conducting this activity perform by two volunteer one is perform by play the role of Doctor and one is the patient. In this activity the patient is deaf and mute. Patient perform the task is sign language in front of doctor. Doctor Task is understand the patient illness. Both Were assigned to do.

Step IV – Presenting the same question paper to students and teachers

Post Questionnaires were again distributed to the students and teachers for assessing their disability knowledge, acceptance/Support treatment with people with disabilities and sensitivity.

Result and discussion

A number of themes were developed throughout my research. The students, the teachers and the administrative staff learned more about 21 different disabilities and became more empathetic and accepting for disabled students/Persons. They were very enthusiastic to know about disabilities and were keenly involved throughout 2 days in each activity. At the preliminary stage, students, teachers and administrative staff had negative perception towards disabilities for instance, *“a disabled individual are inferior because they are not capable to function the same manner as a normal person”*. After attending the program, teachers understood the needs of a special child. *“The dance performed by a special children's”* made them comprehend that *“every child is different and every child has Unique and different capabilities.”* Teachers also felt that diversity in Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College plays an important role in shaping the attitudes towards disabled individuals and facilitate more accepting, understanding and friendly attitude.

Pertaining to typically develop students, they developed an empathetic attitude towards peers with disabilities and realized what and how much problems disabled people face in their life. Throughout each conversation, students were able not only to discuss about the difficulties or limitations of the different disabilities, but also were sensitized to think about the strengths that could be linked with each disability. During the tasks *“tying blind fold”* *“Kaan Bnne Ankh and”* *“writing with pen and paper”* *Understand Patient sign*, students developed a critical thinking and come up with the belief that *“disabled individuals can accomplish task better than normal individuals.”* At the end of the program, students formed ideas about diversity and realized that *“person with disabilities have different abilities, they needed support and acknowledgement, not sympathy.”* They developed positive feelings towards individuals with disabilities and accept that disabled children also can study with them in a one setting.

Administrative staff was also very much positive regarding this program. They provided guidance to the teachers, students and their parents. They also referred the disabled students for special needs and assured to the program team that in future they will take admission of special children in more positive way.

Conclusion

Achieving a better quality of life is the goal and right of each human being. But students with disabilities are differentiated and neglected by the teachers and their peers in Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College, and considered as less of a person to achieve equal education and a better quality of life. The findings of the study have shown that teaching about disabilities foster positive attitude among students. So, structured environment means providing awareness about disability promotes inclusion in the Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College. In conclusion, disability awareness educational programs in regular Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College may improve the knowledge about disabilities among teachers and students of regular Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College s, alter their negative attitudes towards students with disabilities, develop the feeling of warmth and acceptance towards disabled students, and can facilitate more inclusion in the regular Late Shri Nagulal Malviya Government College s to meet the educational need as well as improving the quality of life of students with disabilities.

This study was conducted with a small sample that limited the generalization. Future studies should be conducted with larger and more diverse grades. The present study was focused on Intellectual disability and Deaf blindness, Hearing impairment visual disability, other disabilities like autism and specific learning disabilities, Multiple disability must be included. Conclusively, the study has shown improvement in positive attitudes, but length of the program in terms of session and time need to be extended for developing and facilitating deeper understanding of disabilities and needs of individuals of disabilities.

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