

Needs, Importance and Barriers of Inclusive Education in India

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive Education is gaining importance now a days in education system. The purpose is to assimilate the children with special needs with the regular class. It includes the disabled as well as the non disabled. The present study deals with Inclusive Education and its needs and importance. It also discusses about how it become relevant in Indian education, the role of head teachers for successful inclusion and the barriers of inclusive education. The researcher has collected data from different sources like websites, journals, articles, e-books, reports, commissions, National policies on education and articles published in local national and international papers etc.

Keywords: Inclusive education, disability, Integration, barriers, impairments.

Introduction

Inclusive Education refers to the placement and education of children with disabilities in regular educational classroom with children of the same age who do not have disabilities. It involves regular schools and classroom genuinely adapting and changing to meet the needs of all children as well as celebrating and valuing differences. Inclusive education is a basic value that extends to all children. All children can learn and belong to the mainstream of school and community life. It is championed as a means to remove barrier, improve outcomes and remove discriminations. There is the provision of services to students with special needs with necessary support services and supplementary aids for both children and teachers. It means meeting the needs of all children with and without disabilities for a free and quality public education in the least restrictive and most effective environment. It is accepted that all the children can be educated in a common school to their maximum potential. Government of India has taken so many steps through out the ages for the provision of educational facilities to those children with disabilities. IEDC was launched for that purpose in 1974. NPE 1986 recommended inclusive education as a “goal to integrate the handicapped with the general community at all levels as equal partners to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence”. The National Policy for Persons with

Disability (2006) clarifies that civil society and private sector must operate in order to ensure a dignified life for persons with disability and support for their caretaker. Right of Children for Free and Compulsory Education 2009 speaks of right of free and compulsory education between age group of six to fourteen. PWD Act (2016) ensures that every child with disability is entitled to a free education upto 18 years of age. It is clear that education policies in India has gradually increased focus on children and adults with special needs. All school going children whether they are disabled or not have the right to education as they are the future citizen of the country.

Objectives of the Study

- To study about inclusive education.
- To study the needs and importance of inclusive education.
- To study the role of Govt of India to implement Inclusive Education.
- To study the role of Institutional heads to implement Inclusive Education in school.
- To study the barriers to implement Inclusive Education.

Methodology

The paper is based on secondary data. The Researcher has collected data from different sources. These are websites, journal articles, e-books reports, commission, articles published in local papers, national and international etc. This paper will give a brief description on the need and importance of inclusive education, Inclusive education in India, the role of head teachers and the barriers against inclusive education.

What is Inclusive Education

According to Loreman and Deppeler “Inclusive Education means full inclusion of children with diverse abilities in all respect of schooling that other children are able to access and enjoy.” Inclusion is a term which can be defined as an attitude or a commitment of appreciating diversities and accepting that all children can be educated in a common school to their maximum potential. It requires increasing the capacity of regular schools so that they can respond creatively to greater diversities. It also involves building the capacities of teachers to deal with diverse population of students and to acquire pedagogical competencies that facilitate the learning of all students in their classroom. Inclusive school is a school where everyone belongs, is accepted and is supported by his/her peers and other members in mainstreaming. Once inclusive schooling is achieved integration and mainstreaming is no longer be necessary since no one is left out to be integrated.

Types of Disabilities

- Visual impairment.
- Hearing disabilities.

- Mentally retarded.
- Physically handicapped or orthopaedic handicapped.
- Learning disabilities
- Speech disabilities.
- Emotional disturbance leading to behaviour problems

Need and Importance of Inclusive Education

- It removes the boundaries and obstacles. The purpose of universalization of education becomes possible.
- Inclusive education has the potential to create nicely built nation.
- All children can assimilate themselves in their community and develop a sense of belongingness.
- Gives students opportunity of vocational services to all children with disabilities.
- Helps teachers to recognize their students' strength and weaknesses .As a result they prepare instructional program accordingly.
- Students learn their responsibilities of caring for one another. It motivates them towards self discovery.
- Its aim is to enable child to lead a happy life. A healthy environment is created in his surroundings.
- It maintains social balances by providing equal opportunity to all. It removes all kinds of prejudices and discrimination.
- It provides new manners, methods and parameters to education for all.
- It promotes self reliance and enables children to acquire coping skills. Critical thinking, decision making power and problem solving skills are also developed.

Inclusive Education in India

In India special education as a separate system came into existence long way back. First school for the deaf was established in Bombay in 1883. First school for the blind was established in Amritsar in 1887. Indian Constitutions clearly states about the status of right to equality and opportunity in 1949. The process of integrating children with special needs into regular schools gained prominence in 1974. The scheme provides educational opportunity for children with disabilities in common school to facilitate their integration and ultimate retention in the general school system. It is being implemented through the education department of State Govt. and Union Territories as well as through NGO's. Hundred percent assistance is provided under various components for education of children suffering from disabilities. IEDC aims at retention in common school rather than special school to develop communication and daily living skills at the functional levels. (Puri et. al. 2004;19). Special teachers were appointed in primary and secondary levels. Teachers with experience in NFE and AE were identified. Training was also imparted among the staff. The purpose of RCI is to regulate the training policies and programs in the field of rehabilitation throughout the

country. The council intended to create professionals like audiologists and speech therapists , clinical psychologists, hearing aids and ear mould technicians , special teachers of education and rehabilitation counsellors. The success of inclusive education lied with the professionals from above specializations. The Right of Free and Compulsory Education (RTE Act 2009) represents that every child has a right to full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school. It makes provision for a non admitted child to be admitted to an age appropriate class. Sarva Shiksha Abhijan 2002 speaks about free and compulsory education to the children of 6-14 years of age group including children with disabilities. SSA has adopted a zero rejection policy.NPE 1986 and POA 1992 speak of the need “to integrate children with physically and mentally handicapped with general community as equal partners to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence.” UNCRDP states that persons with disability include those who have long term physical mental intellectual and sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. There is the provision of penalties for offence against persons with disabilities. It not only enhance the rights of Divyang persons but also provide effective mechanism for ensuring their empowerment and true inclusion into the society. NCERT in collaboration with UNICEF has launched Project Integrated Education for Disabled children (PIED) in the year 1987 to strengthen the integration of learners with disabilities into regular schools. National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005) has given importance on including and retaining all children in school through a program that reaffirms the value of each child and enables all children to experience dignity and the confidence to learn.

Role of Institutional Heads

The Head of the Institution is the centre point around whom everything revolves around. Role of proper leadership is very important. Lack of leadership of the Headmaster acts as the barrier to the effective and successful inclusion. They are expected to possess the knowledge, power and attitude ,leadership qualities , initiative and resourcefulness to guide his colleagues in the art and science of inclusive education. In this regard they need to develop conceptual clarity about inclusion, the objectives to be achieved and the activities to be organised in the school. When teachers face difficulties they naturally look to the headmaster for help. If the headmaster lack leadership qualities they will not be able to guide their colleagues, they will not be able to command respect from his colleague and community. Every respect of inclusion-enrolment, retention, identification, assessment curricular and co curricular activities, learner friendly evaluation, infact everything depends on the expertise and initiatives of the headmaster. Certainly for successful inclusion only headmaster is responsible. Willmore (2002) argued that Head teachers play a major role in the successful implementation of an inclusive education. UNESCO (2005) emphasized that Head teachers are to supervise teachers, curriculum and parents. But due to shortage of teachers they have to do the role of full time teachers apart from their administrative role. The students are to be

placed in the class room in the way so that they feel comfortable and get benefitted. Curriculam should be changed according to the disabled so that they can learn. Preparation of teaching aids will be helpful for the students with disabilities. There should be collaboration with medical teams and community, parents and special teachers. Remedial instruction is to be provided regularly.

Barriers of Inclusive Education

To make the process of inclusion a successful one the role of teachers and parents are very important because negative attitude results in negative impact. The teachers must be exposed to orientation program, seminars. The parents also need to be made aware. In most cases teachers label students but labelling is not only harmful in inclusion but also in personality development. The feeling of inferiority in the child with special needs bear negative result. Special teachers should be appointed. Lack of accountability of a teacher is a barrier to successful inclusion. Insufficient funding is a chief threat to the implementation of inclusion. This can hamper ongoing professional development. Children with special needs can be of different type of disabilities. Teacher should respect the diversities and provide programmes keeping in view that individuality. Effective inclusion requires that the staff and school should be tightly integrated. Policy makers who have unsound grasp or opposing views on inclusive education are obstacles to the implementation of inclusive policies. It affects students with disabilities. Elimination of this problem will make true inclusion. Transportation and infrastructure form a major problem in successful implementation of inclusive education. The school must make arrangement for transportation facilities to provide barrier free access to school.

Conclusion

The present study helps to realise the importance of Inclusive education in school. There are lot of importance of Inclusive education. Through such inclusive education the goal of making education universal is met. It breaks the boundaries and removes the inhibitions. If the inhibitions and boundaries are removed the status of education is heightened. The nation will develop in different areas and fields. The teachers have a big role to play. It is the responsibility of a teacher to give conducive education because he is well trained and well educated. Parents should be much more conscious about it.

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