

Inclusive Education in India - Idea, Need and Challenges

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Abstract

Inclusive Education (IE) has emerged as a new approach toward educating children with disability and problems in gaining knowledge together with normal children beneath the same roof. It caters to the needs of all students collectively within one classroom, no matter their strengths or weaknesses. It seeks to maximize the ability of all school students. It is one of the only strategies to promote an inclusive and tolerant society. Approximately 73 million children of primary school age were out of school in 2010, down from a high of over one hundred ten million out-of-school children in the mid-Nineties, consistent with new estimates by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). About 80 percent of the Indian population lives in rural regions without provision for special schools. It means, there are an estimated 8 million children out of school in India (MHRD 2009 statistics), a large number of whom are marginalized by means of dimensions, like poverty, gender, incapacity, and caste. What are the present needs and challenges for accomplishing the goal of inclusive education? How will an inclusive environment meet the interests and needs of children with disabilities? How high-quality education and training can be efficaciously delivered for all children? Therefore, inclusive schools have to deal with the needs of all children in each community and the central and state governments ought to manage inclusive classrooms. Holding in view these questions, this article discusses in detail the concept of inclusive education, including the significance, demanding situations, and also measures to enforce inclusive education in India.

Introduction

Inclusive schooling has been described as the form of education & training that addresses the learning needs of physically or mentally challenged children. Numerous efforts had been made by the government of India over the last many years to provide a comprehensive range of services and education for children or kids with disabilities. In this course, in 1974, (IEDC) Integrated Education for Disabled Children i.e., a centrally sponsored scheme for integrated training for Disabled children, was brought into existence. This scheme is geared toward offering identical possibilities to kids with disabilities in general schools to enhance their retention. The very idea of Inclusive schooling can be traced back to the educational policy, in 1986. This policy suggests 'integrating the handicapped children with the general students at all levels to put together them for regular growth so that they could face life with courage and confidence. In 1990, Declaration on Education for All put a new thrust to the various processes already launched in the country. After that, a training program, for the improvement of experts to respond to the requirements of students with disabilities, was initiated by the Rehabilitation Council of India in 1992. The national policy for people with disability, 2006, has been proved one extra attempt to provide a framework beneath which the nation, civil society, and personal sector work and ensure a respectable life for both the disabled person

and his or her caretakers. The latest advancement in this direction is the Right to Free and Compulsory Education for All (2009), for children from six to fourteen years of age, in order to acquire the target of Education for all. A new scheme of Inclusive Education, EFA, has recently been launched by the Govt. of India to achieve Education for All. Inclusion, in fact, denotes that all children, irrespective of their strengths and weaknesses, could be included in mainstream education. It's quite clear from the above facts that various policies of education in India, from time to time have focused on children and adults with special needs, such that inclusive schooling, today, has turned into a primary policy objective. Today, Numerous regulations were reformulated by some of the growing nations in order to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities into the mainstream after the release of the Salamanca Statement in 1994 (UNESCO). Researches also show that in inclusive settings, teachers spend more time examining new techniques to apply a much broader range of innovative techniques to meet students' needs. Whether a school-going child is disabled or not, has the right to education being a future citizen of that country. It has been proved that the potential of students can be maximized, therefore, we can say that inclusion is the most accepted educational approach of the present time.

The concept of inclusive education

Inclusion is an educational philosophy or an educational idea that offers all students greater possibilities for educational and social fulfillment. The very idea was adopted at the “World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality.” in Spain (1994), Salamanca Statement. It was restated at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal (2000). This assertion solicits governments to give the highest precedence to make schooling structures inclusive, adopting the principle of inclusive education as an important matter of policy. The idea of inclusion is equally supported by the United Nations Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disability, Proclaiming Participation, and Equality for All. Inclusive education (IE) is defined as a system of addressing the diverse needs of all students by means of reducing all barriers in the learning environment. It was proclaimed at the Jometin World Convention (1990) in Thailand that all students will be able to take advantage of instructional opportunities which could meet their basic need of gaining knowledge. Inclusion is an educational method that offers all students greater possibilities for educational and social development.

National Council of academic research and Education (NCERT) and UNICEF joined hands to launch Project Integrated Education for Disabled Children (PIED) in 1987, to give a boost to the integration of students with disabilities into regular schools in India. In current years, the idea has been broadened by aiming to encompass students not only with disabilities but even those who are disadvantaged. This broader outlook has paved the way for developing the National Curriculum Framework (NCF-2005). It emphasizes the significance of retaining all children in schools through a program that reaffirms the self-esteem and dignity of every child and fills them with self-assurance and confidence to learn.

Need and Significance of Inclusive Education

Many efforts have been done the world over to include children with disabilities in the educational mainstream. To achieve truly inclusive education we'll have to plan about incorporating students with special needs into regular schools only because these children face some sort of difficulties in gaining knowledge and participation in the classroom. As an inclusive classroom include students with diverse needs, instructors realize the importance of accepting every pupil as an individual. In an effective inclusive program, teachers adapt activities to the benefit of all students, even though their individual goals are

different. It has been discovered that inclusive education is an effective way to assist all students to be successful. Researches show that students' performance improves effectively in an inclusive setting as inclusion offers them a general education curriculum. Not only this, but an inclusive setting also includes other benefits like friendships, social skills, comfort level with companions who have similar needs and difficulties along with personal principles. As the most crucial feature of friendships is to make human beings experience cared for, loved, and secure, in an inclusive academic environment, low-achieving students are able to get greater help despite the fact that they did not qualify for special education. An interesting effect of inclusive education is that the parents of such children explain that they also experience greater comfort with people with special needs due to their own children's experiences. The special children can create long-lasting friendships that might not be otherwise possible, and these friendships enable them to navigate these social relationships throughout their life.

Demanding situations to enforce Inclusive education in India

There is a pressing need for inclusive education in India as the number of disabled people is very large, their problems are so complex, and there are not enough resources and social attitudes. The road to attaining inclusive education is a protracted one on which both challenges and possibilities will arise. India is a multi-lingual, multi-religious multi-cultural country and its people are stratified in between the sharp socio-economic and caste strains. With an expected 1,210 million human beings, India is the second most populated country after China at the global level. It has 17 percent of the world's population and 20 percent of global out-of-school children. The aim of inclusion is to bring help to students with special abilities, therefore, the key purpose has ended up being harder as such schools accommodate students with increasingly more varied backgrounds and skills. In keeping with reliable estimates from the Census of India (Government of India, 2011), the number of people with disabilities in our country is 26 million, or kind of 2.1% of the entire population. According to, UNICEF's document on the popularity of disability in India (2000) states that there are around 30 million children in India who are suffering from some form of incapacity. 10% of the global populace lives with one or the other disability, and eighty% of these people with disabilities live in developing countries. However, seventy five% of humans with disabilities live in rural regions in India. Since the country's independence, the Government has created a no. of policies about special education. There could be many demanding situations for educating kids with disabilities in regular classrooms. These demanding situations could emanate from scarcity of enough material and human resources. In addition, poor attitudes of teachers and community, non-disabled friends, and their parents and family members also add to this situation. Despite the fact that the government of India has attempted to create policies that are inclusive for people with disabilities, their implementation efforts have no longer led to an inclusive system of education. Moreover, the number of students dropping out of school is getting higher, specifically in poverty-stricken areas. In this area, students are compelled to drop out the school due to their bad financial circumstances and this leads to the growing number of child laborers, which further leads to physical and psychological disabilities. There are more challenges around the negative attitudes and behavior of teachers and people in relation to the ability of disabled children to learn. Another challenge for the implementation of inclusive education in the Indian context is the large class sizes. According to Das, Kuyini, and Desai, about 70% of the teachers teaching special children don't have any support services in their lecture rooms. According to the report of the sixth All India Educational Survey (NCERT, 1998) about 20 million out of India's two hundred million school-aged children of 6-14 years require special education. Children with disabilities are frequently an easy

target for being teased and bullied by peers who are normal or non-disabled peers. A massive number of children with disabilities live in households with income notably below the poverty level. Most of the school personnel in India are not educated to design and put in force educational programs suitable for such students. Maximum training school programs in India don't have any unit on disability studies (Myreddi & Narayan, 2000). As far as the school infrastructure is concerned, most of the schools in India are not at all designed according to the needs and disabilities of these students. Despite various efforts for inclusive schooling in India, about ninety- four percent of youngsters with disabilities didn't acquire any instructional services. Over and above some of these challenges that are common to other developing countries, there are some distinctive functions that make the implementation of educational reform specifically difficult. The pledge of the Indian Govt. of the Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) cannot be fulfilled without taking care of our unique mentally and physically challenged children. The challenge is really big but hope with real dedication is surely going to win.

Few measures for implementing Inclusive education

Inclusive education enables the disabled child to be filled with a sense of pride for they truly feel like they have done something. The greatest example in history is Albert Einstein, who suffered from a learning disability, but still, he came up as the greatest mind of the twentieth century. In the words of Shah, the best way of educating children with disabilities along with their normal peer group or non-disabled peer group is one of the best ways to provide education to such a population in India (Shah, 2005, Shah et al., 2014). The authorities of India need to bridge this gap in education to construct a solid system of inclusive Education in the country. Here are discussed some of the measures for better implementation of Inclusive education in India:

1. The right to schooling (RTE) ought to be applied to all residents of India. Both, the state and the central Governments must understand the importance of a broadened idea of inclusive training that addresses the diverse needs of all learners.
2. Our school must become the center that prepares all children for future life, especially, those who are differently abled (from marginalized sections). A policy of inclusion desires to be carried out in all schools and throughout Indian Education System(NCF, 2005).
3. Inclusive education must work as a flexible system where its flexibility must reflect in the strategies and substances used to give the children the widest possible access to the everyday curriculum.
4. The coaching of instructors for rural special education programs must be deliberately planned because the purpose of these programs would be to integrate disabled persons into their very own environment and community.
5. In every school, a school-based support team needs to be created for the entire faculty to meet the needs of learners with unique educational needs. This group must additionally be a resource for teachers and instructors experiencing troubles in their classrooms.
6. It is the first and foremost responsibility of the school for supporting children to learn along with their commonly developing peers. An inclusive school has to provide training systems with structures and methodologies to meet the desires of all children, especially those who face the biggest obstacles to achieve their right to education.
7. 10. The differently abled children must be dealt with in a similar way as the normal kids and rather than looking at them with sympathy their abilities and talents should be recognized for their self-esteem and the welfare of the society.

8. 11. Suitable changes in the examination system are required, so that it will do away with pure mathematical and logical assessments. Relevant educational materials such as audio learning or textbooks in Braille must be made available.
9. 12. Instructors' attitudes need to be modified in the direction of inclusion that can be offered by creating a few specific conditions so as to have precise practice in this field.
10. 13. There is a need to conduct frequent In-service training programs of two to 3 weeks period for both, the general educators and specific educators in all of the disabilities and in particular regions of disability to correctly train children with disabilities.
11. 14. Inclusion is no longer the sole duty of a specific class teacher, every person should be concerned and must take duty. Education for instructors ought to be sustained and ongoing. It needs to focus most significantly on an attitudinal trade.
12. 15. The curriculum for each of the above programs ought to be cautiously evolved by means of a professional institution that incorporates practicing unique instructors.

Conclusion

As the Right to Education 2009 declares education for all children regardless of their caste, creed, religion, ability, and so on, it is vital to build an inclusive society via an inclusive approach. In doing so, we have challenged commonly held ideals and belief systems and developed a new set of core assumptions. Inclusion is more than a way of educating students with disabilities. It stresses the fact that every child, irrespective of the intensity and severity of his or her disabilities, is a valued member of society and is capable of collaborating in that society. Therefore, a good inclusive education is one that lets all the students take part in all aspects of the lecture room equally as normal children. To meet the demanding situations, the involvement and cooperation of educators, parents, and stakeholders are essential for the creation of better and more inclusive schools. The government of India is attempting to improve its training programmes focusing on the inclusive approach. The challenges can be overcome by elevating awareness of human rights in communities and publicizing high-quality examples of disabled kids and adults succeeding in inclusive training and in life beyond college as an end result. We want to develop an inclusive design of getting to know to make schooling happy for all children so that the schooling for them is welcoming, learner-friendly and useful. Consequently, 'Inclusion' answers many questions asking how to educate these children more effectively.

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