

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: ROLE OF TEACHERS, PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

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Abstract

The inclusion of disabled children in the normal school curriculum is yet to be considered in our country. Significant progress has been made in many countries like USA, UK towards inclusion. According UN, 600 million people in the world have significant disability. Hence, the size of population of disabled person is quite significant and have it is necessary that such persons should be main streamed with the society so that they also contribute to the society. Out of 12 million disabled 4.3 million falls in 4–6 years age group. Besides recognition of the need for educational services to the disabled as a human rights: the Ramamurthy Committee for the review of NPE'86 and Article 45 below are two important recommendations made by the various commissions reports for providing education to the children with special needs.

The Government will consult with all stakeholders including representatives from Disability Right Activist groups, NGOs, parent groups and others, in an attempt to develop a consensus on the understanding of the concept of inclusive education and achieving it with the Indian context. Inclusion is an issue relevant to everyone in the society especially special class teacher, the school manager, the staff and local authorities, parents and their roles are discussed.

Key words : Disabled Children, Disability, Human rights, Consensus, School Curriculum, Parent Groups

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Introduction

The Ministry of Human Resource Development is currently in the process of developing a Comprehensive Action Plan on the Inclusion in Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities. A statement spelling out the areas of action was made in the Rajya Sabha by Shri Arjun Singh, Minister for Human Resource Development on the 21st of March, 2005. Since then, the Ministry has been interacting and consulting with experts, NGOs, Disability Rights Groups, Parents Groups, and Government bodies etc. The following framework of the Action Plan and list of activities has been developed as a result of the initial consultations. The plan covers the inclusion in education of children and young persons with disabilities. ;

The different sectors to be covered in the plan are

- (1) Early Childhood Care and Education
- (2) Elementary Education
- (3) Secondary Education
- (4) Higher and Technical Education and ,
- (5) Vocational Education.

Right to education is universal human right as mentioned by the new policy of education (NPE, 1986) has laid special emphasis on the equality and equity in the education which also includes education for women for Scheduled Castes (SC), scheduled tribes (ST), minorities adult and also children with special needs. The constitutional obligations regarding the Universalization of education in the age groups 6-14 years under Article 45 is considered to be inclusive of the children with special needs as well. Consequently, the disabled population has suffered the most socially, economically and emotionally due to lack of magnitude of total disabled person and children in the worlds and India.

The whole world is progressing towards globalization and India is no exception to it. However, we still neglect the core issues of our country. The inclusion of disabled children in the normal school curriculum is yet to be considered in our country. Significant progress has been made in many countries like USA, UK towards inclusion. According UN, 600 million people in the world have significant disability. Hence the size of population of disabled person is quite significant and hence it is necessary that such persons should be mainstreamed with the society so that they also contribute to the society. According to National Policy on Education, 1986 (NPE, 1986) the statistics of the disabled are as follows:

Out of 12 million disabled 4.3 million falls in 4-6 years age group. Besides recognition of the need for educational services to the disabled as a human rights: the Ramamurthy committee for the review of NPE'86 and article 45 below are two important recommendations made by the various commissions reports for providing education to the children with special needs.

1. *Persons with Disabilities (equal opportunities of rights and full participation) Act, 1995:* This act has passed on December 12th, 1995 and notified on February 7th, 1996. The act elaborated the responsibility of the control and state government local bodies to provide services, facilitates and equal opportunities to people with disabilities for participating as productive citizens of the country. This act provides for both preventive and promotional aspects of rehabilitation. This act enlists the rights and facilities persons with disabilities would be entitled to which are enforceable.
2. *Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992 and its relevance to education:* This act was passed in 1992 for the purpose of constituting the rehabilitation council of India for regulations the training of rehabilitation professionals and for maintenance for control rehabilitation registers.

This makes it necessary to identify this segment of the population and this special needs undertake suitable programmes to educate and rehabilitate them in society this would reduce the handicapping of their disability and enable them to enjoy reasonable level of quality of life. In order to understand the present status of the education of the disable in India and various recommendations made by the various commission reports for providing education. It is essential to know what is meant by inclusive education and how it should be introduced at teacher education, programme. This paper throws light on these aspects of inclusive education.

Definition of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education means education to all the children and youth with and without disabilities or difficulties in ordinarily preschool provision, schools, colleges and universities with appropriate networks of support. Here we have to change the system of education either the structure and for curriculum according to the needs and aspirations, abilities of children. It is acceptable fact that the children who live together, learn to live together, leads to harmony among the diverse groups.

Provides quality education for all students in inclusive setting has been identified as perhaps the most challenging aspects of teacher education programmes because material resource have no value if human resources were overlooked. Therefore, there is need to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the children and analyses whether inclusive education system can be practiced what is the role of teachers and parents and community and if not why? If yes, what techniques are to be developed and adopted to make the system effective in the best interest of each child?

In its broadest and all encompassing meaning, inclusive education, as an approach, seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. It implies all learners, young people — with or without disabilities being able to learn together through access to common pre-school provisions, schools and community educational setting with an appropriate network of support services. This is possible only in a flexible education system that assimilates the needs of a diverse range of learners and adapts itself to meet, these needs. It aims at all stakeholders in the system (learners, parents, community, teachers, administrators, policy makers) to be comfortable with diversity and see it as a challenge rather than a problem.

Research has shown that inclusive education results in improved social development and academic outcomes for all learners. It leads to the development of social skills and better social interactions because learners are exposed to real environment in which they have to interact with other learners each one having unique characteristics, interests and abilities. The non-disabled peers adopt positive attitudes and actions towards learners with disabilities as a result of studying together in an inclusive classroom. Thus, inclusive education lays the foundation to an inclusive society accepting, respecting and celebrating diversity.

Inclusion is an issue relevant to every one in the society special class teacher, the school manager, the staff and local authorities, parents.

Need for Inclusive Education

1. All children and young people should be given chance to develop their abilities, as successful learners, confident individual, responsible citizens and should contribute to society national, and international progress, irrespective of their cast, creed culture, abilities and disabilities.

2. It is the place, which removes the discrimination as everyone belongs to same community is accepted and supported by his or her peers and other members of the school community.
3. The staff may have the satisfaction that they have had an inclusive non-discriminative approach for teaching and they also have the feeling of additional support to the needs of the different groups of class.
4. Inclusive education provides the right to education for every child and they belong to mainstream and to work toward equal opportunities for all pupils and students.
5. Unity in diversity brings strengths to all living systems.
6. Providing special education leads to discrimination among young and adults. This is against the human rights education. So inclusive education leads to positive outlook to the unity.
7. Entire human beings need each other and this can be fulfilled in the inclusive education.

Role of Teacher for inclusive Education

1. Inclusive education should start by conducting both specialized programmes for disabled children and regular program.
2. Create awareness among all the teachers about the children with special needs.
3. Equip teachers with skills to manager mild and moderately disabled children in the general classrooms.
4. Preparation of resource teachers to serve specific categories of disability.
5. Preparation of multi-category resource teachers to serve more than one category of disability.
6. Teachers look forward to teaching in an inclusive environment and are ready to face the challenge and are ready to face the challenge by acquiring skills needed for the said challenge.
7. Teachers should sought the assistance of special teachers and specialized training to remain effective in the inclusive class and face the future challenge.
8. Teachers should organize co-curricular activities like games. Art and craft remain common for both normal and disabled children.

9. Training in behaviour management, staff collaboration, curriculum modification and program evaluation should be provided to the teacher, principals, school -and college.
10. A statewide network of faculty may also be developed by the experienced faculty having competency, commitment and confidence to implement inclusive education program to support / mentor other new faculty.
11. Regular and continues communication and planning must take place among faculty members both before and during implementation process. Emphasis should be laid on the promotion of inclusive education.
12. Teachers should have positive attitude towards his/her students irrespective of the caste, creed, disability etc.
13. Motivation is strong factor in shaping attitudes and motivate teachers in more flexible.

Role of Parents in Providing Inclusive Education

1. Parents of all children should be taken into confidence, so that their children are given proper individual attention in the inclusive setting.
2. Parents attitudes like overprotection, rejection, inconsistent and over expectations should be changed.
3. Providing proper awareness among the inclusive education for both parents of normal and special needs children.
4. Regular interaction between the teachers and parents should be arranged to discuss the progress of children.
5. Parents of disabled children have actual interest in inclusive education and they want their children to get education with normal children, this motivation should be sustained by the authorities of normal school. Special provision should be made to take admission to such students.
6. Proper arrangement should be made for social support such a formation of peer group.

Role of Community for Inclusive Education

Now a day the community people are participating in the school program by way of School Development and Monitoring Committees (SDMC). Therefore it is necessary to take the community help for implementation for inclusive education at the school level.

1. Community people should also be taken into confidence and should be given inductive training or orientation by the experts in the field of inclusive education.
2. An effective approach to develop communities of beliefs about inclusion should be put into place by creating many opportunities for all community members to think carefully and discuss practical actions.
3. A committee may be formed with special general education teachers, parents and the community members principal to explore research on inclusion programs, report findings and recommendations to the faculty, solicit input and develop and implement the plan.

Conclusion

Two programmes running currently supporting mainstreaming of disabled children are the Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The present attempt will be to complement and, supplement these programmes in the movement from Integration to Inclusion.

The plan will concurrently focus on enrollment of children and youth with disabilities and creating an enabling educational environment to support the inclusion process through review and adaptations in curricula, capacity building among various groups ranging from policy makers to education administrators, teachers and parents groups. Pre-service and in-service training of mainstream school teachers will be a prime focus with the disability component included in all teachers training programme.

Recognizing the importance of early intervention in the first five years of life for skill development and learning, Early Childhood Care and Education sector will be seen as an entry point for education for children with special needs. The Department of Women and Child Development of the HRD Ministry will focus on this area through their ICDS and all early intervention programmes.

Identification, enrolment and retention of children with special needs in the age group 6-14 will continue as part of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Existing support and delivery systems developed as part of the ongoing programme will be reviewed and strengthened. Providing physical access by removing architectural barriers in schools and assistance for transportation will be given priority. Removing attitudinal barriers through a range of mass awareness programmes is expected to give a further thrust to the enrollment programme by creating a

demand from the parents side. The Department of Elementary Education, MHRD will be the nodal agency coordinating these activities.

As the country moves towards the Universalization of secondary education, the needs of young persons with disability will be included as part of the programme as it evolves. Current activities will aim towards ensuring resource and other support within the education system in order for those wishing to access secondary education, Counseling and resource support will also be extended for those wishing to pursue vocational education at this level.

At the higher and technical education level, universities and colleges will be monitored to ensure compliance with the 3% reservations. Setting up of disability cells, departments of disability studies will be taken up. The Department of Secondary and Higher Education will be the nodal agency overseeing the activities.

The government will consult with all stakeholders including representatives from Disability Right activist groups, NGOs, parent groups and others, in an attempt to develop a consensus on the understanding of the concept of inclusive education and achieving it within the Indian context. This group will assist the Ministry of HRD in outlining norms and standards for successful inclusion of children and youth with disability in education, identifying resource support required and providing guidelines for changes in teachers training methodology and developing educational assessment and evaluation tools.

Therefore, definition of Universalization of elementary education and “Education” for all is remained incomplete if we neglect the other neglected students like disabled and special need children.

Therefore, it is not arms, legs, eyes and ears but the spirit that matters for man making education that is why parents, community and teachers must take active role. It is a joint venture to judge for what disabled can to rather than for what he cannot do”. Then only inclusive education will flourish and progress in this country.

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