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## EDUCATION TO INCLUSION: TIME TO RETHINK

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### ABSTRACT:

*Teachers have a critical role in shaping potential behavior of learners which enables them to face the challenges of life constructively. Teachers must have the ability to establish a learning environment that inspires and scaffolds all learners' engagement in the learning process. It is not an easy undertaking, but teachers must possess specific knowledge, abilities, and values in order to properly implement them. Throughout history, several beliefs and practices have arisen with the goal of progressing and maximizing the benefits of education. Teachers will be better able to achieve educational goals if they are aware of such principles and methods. Inclusive education is one of such concepts which ensure equitable educational opportunities for all. (Forlin, 2010). Inclusive education aims at providing education and inviting participation of all learners in the learning process irrespective their social, economical and cultural disadvantages. Exposition to, socially, economically and culturally diversify atmosphere is necessary for learners to make them capable of addressing life realistically. Such education is capable of making all students feel accepted and appreciated, which facilitates the learning process.*

**KEYWORDS:** Constructive, Inclusion, Inclusive Education, Diversity

*"If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way that they learn." - Ignacio Estrada*

### INTRODUCTION:

Inclusive education is an effort to make sure that diverse learners- those with disabilities, different languages and cultures, different homes and family lives, different interests and ways of learning are exposed to teaching strategies that reach them as individual learning. It involves schools and classrooms adapting the ways in which they work to ensure all students are educated together in common contexts, and are created equitably (Andrew and Lupart, 2000, Loreman, 1999). Listening

to the perspectives in a school system and empowering all members to establish a schooling method dedicated to recognizing and removing current and potential sources of discrimination is what inclusive education is all about. (Slee, 2003a). moreover, it is about a philosophy of acceptance where all people are valued and treated with respect (Carrington, 2000).

**The National Center on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion** defines inclusive education as-providing to all students, including those with significant disabilities, equitable opportunities to receive effective educational services, with the needed supplementary aids and support services, in age appropriate classrooms in their neighborhood schools, in order to prepare students for productive lives as full members of society.

So we conclude inclusive education is an approach to educate students with special educational needs. In these students with special educational needs. In this students with special needs spend most or all of their time with non-disabled students. It is about the child's right to participate and the school's duty to accept the child. Inclusion objects the use of special schools or classrooms to separate students with disabilities from students without disabilities. It is based on full participation by students with disabilities and upon respect for their social, civil and educational rights.

#### **Inclusion is different from these 3 terms:**

- **Mainstreaming** Placing a special education student in one or more regular education classes once the student has shown an ability to keep up with work assigned in a special education class. There is usually none special education teacher in a mainstream classroom.
- **Integrating** Placing a special education student in a setting with both disabled and non-disabled student, often just for a portion of each school day. When integration is on a part-time basis, it can make a special needs. Students feel like a visitor, unattached and excluded from the integrated classes.
- **Integrated Co-Teaching** Placing a special education student in a setting with disabled and non-disabled students where teachers are assigned to the class. In a recent effort to standardize the varied terminology used by many school districts.

#### **Expanding Concepts of Inclusion:**

All commentators now agree that inclusion should mean much more than the mere physical presence of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools (e.g. Nind et al., 2003). Such students should also be able to successfully access the mainstream curriculum, which may require some support, individualization, or differentiation. Indeed, in the United Kingdom and the United States, schools are required to give curricular and physical access to all students. They should feel, act, and be treated as complete participants or members of the school community, not just students. Farrel and Ainsow (2002) have described this as Presence-Acceptance-Participation –

Achievement cycle. Beyond this, inclusion implies celebrating the diversity and supporting the achievement and participation of all pupils who face learning or behaviour challenges of any kind, in terms of socio-economic circumstances, ethnic origin, cultural heritage, religion, linguistic heritage, gender, sexual preference and soon. Further school should engage all families and community as well as all children, seeking effective intergenerational learning across the lifespan, which might occur inside school or outside or through a combination of these.

### **History of Inclusive Education:**

Over 100 million primary school-aged children are unable to attend school, an estimated 98% of children with disabilities in developing countries cannot access formal education. Most of this exclusion is due to discrimination.

The committee on the Rights of the child has identified up to thirty different grounds on which children may face social exclusion, including gender, race, rationality, disability, child labour, poverty and HIV/AIDS. Discrimination in society is reflected in school and education systems. Children with disabilities may be seen as 'uneducable' and denied a place at school.

Children with special needs are sometimes placed in institutions that provide subpar educational opportunities and isolate them from school and community life, making it nearly impossible for them to achieve their full potential. The concept of inclusive education originated with the grassroots disability movement, campaigning for an end to discrimination and exclusion.

### **Land Marks in Inclusive Education:**

Residential institutions, or asylums, first appeared in the early 1800s to accommodate persons with hearing, visual, mental, or emotional disabilities. Despite the fact that access to such services was far from general, special day schools remained the major educational choice for the disabled until the early 1900s. Individuals with disabilities were given greater, more localized access and slightly better services as a result of these changes.

During the 1950s and 1960s parents of children with disabilities organized to pressure courts and legislatures for changes in educational service available to their children which results into the civil rights for those with disabilities and The Education for all Handicapped Children Act (1975).

- By the 1950s, it was widely accepted that separated special classes were not the best educational environment with most children with special needs, because it was evident that educating kids with special needs in segregated settings limited rather than maximized their potential.
- The outcomes of the civil right movement were in its great surge and the fights for equal rights and non-discriminatory laws were being culminated in the U.S. Supreme Court with the historic Brown Decision. Brown vs. Board of Education affirmed the notion that segregation in schools denies kids equal educational opportunities in 1954.

- In the 1970s landmark civil rights legislation made it possible for all children with special needs to obtain a free and public education, as well as equitable access to the entire spectrum of school activities.
- The U.N. Convention on the Rights of Child (1989)- Child's right in respect of freedom from Discrimination.
- The 1997 reauthorization of the individuals with 'Disabilities Education Act' (IDEA) specifically supports inclusive thinking and practices. IDEA calls for involving students with special needs in general education curricula, assessment practices and classrooms. This gives the philosophy of acceptance and flexibility.
- The Salamanca statement and Framework for action on Special Needs Education (1994) emerged as result of deliberations held by more than 300 participants representing 92 governments including India and 25 International Organizations in June 1994.
- On Jan 8, 2002, THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT, was signed in to law. The legislation bolsters the philosophy that the majority of students with special needs be moved out of segregated classrooms and given the appropriate strategies, accommodations and teaching styles to match their unique learning styles. The NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT builds on four principles for education reform; Accountability for results, doing what works based on scientific research, expanded parents options and expanded local control & flexibility.
- The more recently there is focus on achieving holistic outcomes through Agendas Such as Every Child Matters (2003) and Right for Every Child (2006).
- Un convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities (2006)- from the U.S Department of Education's 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Report it appears that about 35% of students with disabilities are attending school in regular classes, out of remaining 65% , 36.3% receive special educational services in a resource room setting and 25.5% are in self-contained classes. A little over 5% receive special educational service outside the regular school setting.
- More recently to accomplish the objective of "Educational for All" the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), a programme supported by the world bank and the ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India has adopted inclusive education as part of its programme. The intention is to make primary school more responsive to all children including children with special needs.

In spite of all the polices and legislations inclusive education is still in the infancy stage but it is only the long-term solution for educating all the children.

### **Issues and Challenges of Inclusive Education:**

Children with Special Needs experience a variety of concerns and challenges in inclusive education, including:

1. **Characteristics of Individual Pupils:** As we know in a diverse classroom all of the children are sitting together in a classroom. Many students are affected by various disabilities. It's difficult to spot them in a classroom full of different students.
2. **Lack of access to the mainstream:** At present only 4 to 5% of children with special needs out of 30 million have access to education. Most schools do not appear to be willing to accommodate these children's needs.
3. **Lack of awareness and Attitude:** The whole idea of inclusive education is defeated due to lack of awareness, positive attitude and sensitivity on the part of teachers, classmates, parents and community and as a result these children experience discrimination.
4. **Lack of trained teachers:** Teachers lack competence and will to modify methodology as per the need of children with special need and other children
5. **Large class size:** There are normally 60 to 70 students in a class which makes individualized attention very difficult and teachers find it all the more difficult with children with special needs.
6. **Lack of child-centered and relevant Curriculum:** The curriculum lacks flexibility and does not provide choice to these children. The teaching-learning materials are likewise inappropriate for both special needs and non-special needs youngsters..
7. **Lack of proper infrastructure:** Special needs children require a variety of teaching and learning tools. In India, the majority of schools lack adequate teaching and learning tools.
8. **Lack of participatory activities:** Children with special need require such a learning environment in which they can learn by participating in small groups
9. **Involvement of parent and Community:** As we know the children with learning disabilities are less encouraging. So the non-involvement of parents and community become a barrier
10. **Accountability:** The lack of accountability of teachers poses challenges in inclusive education
11. **Partnership:** To ensure the programme a success, parents, teachers, the school, and the community must work together. We discovered that the software was missing.
12. **Collaboration or consultation:** The collaboration between the different agencies of education such as Government, NGO, Community. We discovered that they don't work together very well.
13. **Lack of Support:** CWSN children required regular support from parents and teachers to make satisfactory learning. We discovered that some schools lack support and even discriminate against children with special needs.
14. **Peer Rejection:** Peers try to bully and reject them on a regular basis. They do not consider these youngsters to be a part of their family. One of the most common reasons for youngsters

dropping out of school is because of this. One of the most significant impediments to inclusive education is peer rejection.

As per a recent UN estimate, 75% of Indian children with special needs (CWD) do not visit any educational institution during their lifetime. Despite the availability of an apparently comprehensive education policy that includes mechanisms to make the Indian school system inclusive, this is the case.

Inclusive education refers to a model of learning where CWD attend the same schools as children without disabilities. To satisfy student needs, this educational method emphasizes adjustments in system-level practices and regulations.. However, even though India has a variety of laws and policies on education, data and on-ground experiences show that an ecosystem of inclusion has not yet been achieved. This blog examines the issues in the system legal system and offers suggestions.

### **Current laws ignore preparedness for inclusive learning:**

As argued by the renowned psychologist Reuven Feuerstein, there are three prerequisites for a truly inclusive classroom:

- (a) The preparation of the receiving schools,
- (b) The preparation of the child,
- (c) The preparation of parents.

However, when it came to inclusive and effective learning for CWD, India's education regulations have failed to concentrate on the equal preparation of these essential stakeholders. Here's how to do it:

- There are no legal requirements either for the children or even the parents to be prepared for an inclusive school setting. The lack of preparation before children enter mainstream classrooms leads to issues in adjustment with non-disabled peers and efficacy of instruction intake. While some states, like as Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, have held specialized residential bridge courses for people with CWD, others do not.
- Furthermore, the regulations do not require authorized authorities to provide support and counseling to parents of children with CWD, which may cause parents to be hesitant to send their kids to mainstream schools.
- According to research, even schools aren't fully prepared to deliver inclusive education. Das, Kuyini, and Desai (2013) looked at the existing ability levels of normal teachers in secondary schools in Delhi when it came to teaching CWD in a study. They reported that nearly 70% of the regular school teachers had neither received training in special education nor had any experience teaching students with disabilities. Further, 87% of the teachers did not have access to support services in their classrooms.

As a result, as long as the law's focus is on access to education rather than access to high-quality education, it is merely giving attention to the concept of inclusive classrooms.

### **Lack of clarity in current laws:**

Although the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPWD Act) states that educational institutes should “*provide reasonable accommodation according to the individual’s requirements and provide necessary support, individualised or otherwise, in environments that maximise academic and social development consistent with the goal of full inclusion,*” it does not clearly specify norms and standards on ‘reasonable accommodation’, ‘individualised support’ and ‘full inclusion’. As a result, it only gets halfway to the aim of inclusive education without the essential specifications.

Furthermore, there is a lack of consistency among India's primary legislations governing inclusive education. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act), for example, does not even define inclusive education, despite the fact that the RPWD Act makes it a statutory promise.

### **How to implement inclusive education in the classroom?**

It’s clear that an inclusive classroom can be beneficial for many students; it’s crucial to give all students a fair chance to learn in the right environment for them. Let's take a look at a few of the ways to make your classroom more inclusive.

#### **Cooperative learning:**

Presenting tasks and activities in a way that supports cooperative learning is an excellent way to succeed inclusive education in the classroom. By learning in groups, students are all given the opportunity to participate. When it comes to group work, rather than allowing pupils to choose their own groups, you might wish to establish fair groupings.

Students will not only have the opportunity to be a part about something, but they'll also be able to practice important social skills with one another. Those with impairments or behavioral issues aren't the only ones who benefit from group learning. It enables all students to collaborate with a variety of persons and promotes inclusiveness even more.

Specialized training Teachers should be provided with the appropriate tools and training to ensure that they are providing the best learning environment.

**Up skilling** teachers and obtaining more training would be highly effective in improving student inclusion.

Courses and training on topics such as inclusion and student diversity can be quite beneficial in terms of learning tips, approaches, and strategies. Training in areas like trauma sensitivity, autism, and SEN can be quite beneficial. These courses can provide students with the knowledge they need to deal with student problems.

**Adapted lessons and tasks:**

For students having limitations were identified or learning issues, traditional instruction isn't always the best option. To keep students engaged, the material should be changed to fit these kids, making classes more adaptable and engaging. Those who struggle to learn from text-based content may benefit from a more interactive approach to learning. To boost interest, use more videos and graphics in classes, as well as instructional games or object-based learning. Many kids learn by playing, and this can be a fun method to engage them in learning. When offering educational materials, it's critical to get to know your pupils and consider their unique needs. Ensure all students are paying attention in class and participating actively in tasks.

**Use diverse methods of marking:**

It's not always the greatest method to marking work to assess all pupils' function in the same way. Some youngsters may have difficulty completing particular types of homework or putting their views on paper. You can make your marking more inclusive by separating substance and concepts from English and grammar, for instance. You might also use a point system to evaluate effort. When providing pupils feedback, make sure everything is clear and understandable to them, and double-check that they comprehend your suggestions.

Although it is useful for students to view examples of others' work or exams, you will not need students to compare or compete with grades or comments they have received. The very last thing we need to do is damage kids' confidence, which could lead to them regressing and not putting out their best effort in homework and class work

**Supplementary materials:**

Components in the classroom can be extremely beneficial for children with visible or invisible challenges, along with anyone who requires some more assistance. Even the most attentive students will find it difficult to acquire knowledge solely by watching and listening to a course. You should include an activity or job in this content, no matter how minor, to ensure that students can apply what they've learned in a larger group setting. Students' knowledge of the subject can be enhanced by improving them with learning aids including such calculators or science and engineering models. Students with linguistic challenges may find pictures and flashcards particularly helpful. Re-teaching topics or recapping lessons is a great way to help students that may have a harder time understanding lesson content. Additional textbooks or help sheets to students, or even record the lesson and make it available for them to recap at home.

**Conclusion:**

In order for India's inclusive education system to be successful, parents, teachers, and even children without disabilities must be educated about it and notified of its benefits. These individuals play a critical role in the project implementation since they regularly engage with children with



disabilities and shape their immediate surroundings. To successfully grasp the hurdles to inclusive education, we have to understand the problems of the project implementation from the perspectives of all of these categories of people. It's critical to comprehend the real-life issues that parents of disabled children experience, which leads them to enrol their children in special schools to alleviate their concerns. Similarly, it is critical to examine the impediments to inclusive education from the perspective of teachers and school officials. They may be concerned about taking on the role and responsibility of children with disabilities due to a lack of teacher training, insufficient infrastructure, a shortage of trained personnel, the extra care and supervision that these children require, negative attitudes among peers and parents of students without disabilities, social bias, and so on. Because schools play such a crucial part in moulding a child's future and are one of the most important contributors to their well-being, it is critical to raise awareness, understanding, and a positive thought process about inclusive education in Indian. Similarly, it is critical to examine the impediments to inclusive education from the perspective of teachers and school officials. They may be concerned about taking on the role and responsibility of children with disabilities due to a lack of teacher training, insufficient infrastructure, a shortage of trained personnel, the extra care and supervision that these children require, negative attitudes among peers and parents of students without disabilities, social bias, and so on. Because schools play such a crucial part in moulding a child's future and are one of the most important contributors to their well-being, it is critical to raise awareness, understanding, and a positive thought process about inclusive education in Indian society.

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