

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION (A Boon or A Bane)

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Abstract: *The aim of education is not to add to the sum of human knowledge. Its purpose is to open the mind and not fill it, as would an ash can or even a golden bowl (Christian Gaus). The mixing of learning and playing is important. Indeed it is the moment of mixing and letting the touch of magic enter into the hard work of teaching. We need an education, which teaches us not merely how to use it but also how to use it well. Inclusivity in education makes it more meaningful and helps in enabling the labelled. Education is for all and there can be no compromise with the proposition. What is once for the few must not be for the many. No society can succeed henceforth unless all the citizens are included in the quality education system. Therefore, inclusive education comes in the picture as a powerful tool to develop a distinctive sense of appreciative awareness. Education is dynamic and requires a great zeal and efforts on the part of learner as well as the teacher. Inclusive education provides a friendly environment for all the learners. It makes the learning possible for all the privileged and underprivileged. School become more welcoming to people of all abilities and provide a better environment and curriculum. Inclusive system also encourages the involvement of parents to create better learning.*

Key Words: *Inclusive, abilities, Globally, Ethnicity, Underprivileged, Individual education plan, Skill acquisition, Integrity, Disabilities, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia, Mental Retardation, Intelligent quotient, Physical disability, Proximal development, Scaffolding.*

1. INTRODUCTION :

Somebody once said “the supreme purpose of education was to enable a man to ask the right questions”. We may expand and adapt that wise saying and state that the essential purpose of education is to enable men to ask fundamental questions and teaching people to behave as they do not behave. In today’s world, education is dedicated to equality of opportunity. Unfortunately, there is such a thing as equal denial of opportunity.

Children of average or less than average ability are not the only ones who deserve consideration. Every child irrespective of intellectual capability, physical deformity or learning disability is entitled to receive education in equal seriousness, intensity and comprehensiveness to the education that a child with intellectual capability would receive in the best educational system of any country. “Education is for all, and there can be no compromise with the proposition” is a true phrase that describes “Inclusive Education”. UNESCO believes that every learner matters equally Millions of people worldwide continue to be excluded from education for gender orientation, language, religion nationality, economic condition race or ethnicity and ability. UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in education (1960) as well as sustainable Development Goal 4 and the Education 2030 Framework for action emphasize inclusion and equity as the foundation for quality education.

2. What is Inclusive Education?

Inclusive education means that all students attend and are welcomed by their neighbourhood school in age-appropriate, regular classes and are supported to learn, contribute in all aspects of the life of the school. Inclusive education implies that all students Irrespective of their ethnicity, disability or social status receive meaningful education in the best possible environment. This ensures quality without considering issues such as capability, language, ethnicity, culture family background, age or disability. All students with and without disability (IQ above 70, Dysgraphia,

Discalculia or any other learning disability or Physical disability) participate and learn together in the same class and are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the life of the school.

3. Inclusive Education is best described in the following lines:

1. Involves all children, i.e. normal children, children with illness, children of migrants, children from tribal areas, children with disabilities.
2. Inclusive education provides a friendly environment for all the learners.
3. Need-based education provided to all learners.
4. Aids and equipments provided to the disabled learners to fulfill their basic needs.
5. Special educational programs to be run by the school for disable learners to provide equal educational opportunities.

In short, inclusive education means that all students can access and fully participate in learning alongside their similar aged peers.

Benefit of Inclusive Education:

Inclusive education has a number of benefits for many educational settings. In almost all the countries globally, inclusive education has evolved as an effective model of learning for all the children.

Some of the benefits are listed as follow:

1. Social initiation and networks
2. Greater access to general curriculum
3. Skill acquisition
4. Achievement of individual educational plan(IEP) goals
5. Academic, social and behavioral development
6. Skill development

Inclusive educational environment also provides teachers and staff innovative practices and resources to help them accomplish the goals of successful learning outcomes. With the use of instructional strategies and compensatory support devices like wheel chairs, hearing aids, audio-visual aids, adjustable furniture, standing frame, etc. an educator can use step by step approach and proceed from simple to complex task thus, concentrating on the child rather than on the syndromes. According to the **UNICEF** facts finding there are an estimate of 240 million children with disabilities worldwide and like all children, children with disabilities have ambitions and dreams for their future. They too need quality education to develop their skills and realize their full potential. Inclusive education allows students of all backgrounds to learn and grow side by side, to the benefit of all. But, progress comes slowly, inclusive system requires changes at all levels, governments must align laws and policies with the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, and regularly collect and analyze data to ensure children are reached with effective services.

4. Inclusive Education is a boon for education system or a bane .:

Inclusive education is an education system that strives to include the needs of all students, from their beginning years through to the end of their life. This includes students with special needs or learning disabilities, to a variety of other factors that are unique to the individual. Educators become more aware of the needs of students to provide a well-rounded educational experience. The students on the other hand are better motivated and are able to work on projects with other like-minded children. This also helps greatly in their social growth. School become more welcoming to people of all abilities and provide a better environment and curriculum. Inclusive system also encourages the involvement of parents. When teachers and parents work together to create a better learning environment for all of the students they are more likely to be involved in their child's education. Along with this students will have the opportunity to learn how to interact with others and the world around them. Even the students with intellectual disabilities feel included and have opportunities to participate in social activities just like their fellow students.

Because inclusive education is about quality education for all it is important to look at the potential benefits of inclusion for all the students with special education need. For instance, the meta-analysis conducted by Oh-Young and Filler(2015) compared the outcomes of students with disabilities between placement settings. This study involved an investigation

of differences between outcome measures of students with disabilities placed in more integrated settings with those of students placed in less integrated settings. A meta-analysis was conducted using the findings from 24 studies published in peer-reviewed journals from 1980 through 2013. Results from the analyses suggest that there were significant differences ($p < 0.0001$) between placement settings with the majority of students with disabilities in more integrated settings outperforming those in less integrated settings on both academic and social outcome measures. In simple terms-students in more integrated settings outperformed those in more segregated settings both in the academic and social domains. The recent review of research by **Kefallinou et al (2020)** it justifies that inclusion both from the educational and social angles, due to the proven positive effects of educational inclusion on the academic outcomes of students with disabilities and its positive impact on the subsequent social inclusion of people with disabilities in terms of further academic opportunities and qualifications, access to employment and developing personal relationships within the community with the theoretical contributions refers to the relevant role of peer help and other forms of sharing learning interactions. It is found that when children try to explain learning content to their peers with special educational needs or try to help them solve a problem, they expand what **Vygotsky** called the zone of **proximal development** (1978) or what Bruner called scaffolding (1996) both the authors emphasized the children's learning and argued that these interactions could emerge not only form more capable peers. This interaction allows for the creation of shared learning (**Mercer and Littleton, 2007**).

Over the past ten years, there has been a growing impetus worldwide towards “**full inclusion**”. More recently, this has been balanced by desires to ensure ‘**responsible inclusion**’. The advantages of inclusion are numerous. However, regardless of intent, there are drawbacks to inclusive education too. Let us also consider the challenges of inclusive education that hinder the actual meaning of inclusiveness.

Inclusive education may bring about unfair treatment of children this may create segregation among the students, as some students might fail to understand why those with special needs receive less criticism, less homework or more attention. This situation slows down normal students, who are not with disabilities in their learning children with disabilities may be subjected to bullying as they may find it difficult to form social relationships. They feel inadequate hence lowering their self-esteem. When it comes to school facilities, some students may require special infrastructural adjustments on the building facilities to accommodate some form of disabilities such as those using wheel chairs. They need the building of facilities that would enable access to the top floors of the building. The building of such school facilities may be quiet costly and time-consuming and may require long-term considerations and therefore, may not be applicable as immediate intervention (**Cole,1999**). Another challenge that may be faced by school or institution when trying to apply inclusive practices may be the challenge of providing adequate number to teachers that are trained to handle students with special needs. Such schools may have difficulty in providing support and accommodating diversity (**Walton, et al. 2009**) hiring therapist and trained staff may be quiet expensive and may not be readily embraced by non-aided schools that do not have access to funding from the governments.

Another major challenge is the implementation of some of the laws related to inclusive education. The apparent conflicts in government policy between the ‘standard’ and ‘League tables’ discourse and the inclusive schools discourse make it difficult for school to become more inclusive (**Jennifer Evans, et al.2002**) There are considerable obstacles in the way of full inclusion that burden the special child the teacher and the school as a whole.

In schools where inclusions have not been previously practical due to the lack of awareness or the lack of fund, it is important to build an inclusive school strategy that may help in overcoming the challenges of inclusive education.

5. CONCLUSION:

Inclusive education is definitely a boon for the education system if important features and practices are followed correctly. A systematic change within our education system is the need of the hour. The lack of consistency and uncertainties about what inclusion is has resulted in difficulties implementing inclusion in both policy and practice. The concept of inclusion in education is not confined merely to classroom walls or school compounds. It is a change in attitude towards life. Acceptance and open-mindedness with regard to physical and mental differences must be the core of inclusive education. What is thought to be inclusion is actually integration where students with disability are placed in mainstream schools without significant changes to ensure that students with disability have a sense of belonging. Whereas true inclusion in education means accepting unconditionally all children into regular classes and the life of the school. Developing education goals according to each child's abilities and helping them achieve to their full potentials. The sacrifice of many parents and other specific people would be required to make inclusion a possibility and success.

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