

RESEARCH ARTICLE

ROLE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive education is a teaching model that brings together all students, regardless of their abilities, in the same learning environment. Its goal is to ensure every student is treated equally and given the same opportunities, while embracing their diversity and individuality without discrimination. Unfortunately, there are still instances where students are treated unfairly due to their unique traits. No student should ever be excluded or separated based on differences in learning ability, and no teacher should allow such thinking. Common factors leading to discrimination include disabilities, caste, gender, family income, or language. Inclusive education seeks to remove these barriers and promote equality among all students.

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INTRODUCTION

We all recognize that education is the cornerstone of a nation's development, as the progress, unity, and integrity of both society and the country rely on it. Education is not just about preparing for a career or livelihood; it also fosters various qualities in children, such as cognitive, creative, moral, cooperative, equal, and emotional skills. Today, through initiatives like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the Right to Education, every child has the right to an education. These programs will only be successful if we integrate children who are physically, mentally, and emotionally different into the mainstream education system. The modern perspective on educating children with such differences is no longer focused on providing them with special education, a view that many educators oppose. In the past, little attention was given to the education of these special children, leading to the establishment of separate schools for them. These schools were seen as distinct, causing these children to feel isolated from society and develop feelings of inferiority. Currently, many educators and scientists advocate for integrated education within mainstream schools so that all children can receive an equal education. The question arises: how can we talk about equal opportunities for education while still creating separate schools for special children? Inclusive education, which provides equal educational opportunities by teaching special children in general schools, addresses this issue. Though educating all children in mainstream schools poses challenges, it is not impossible. Inclusive education means adapting the educational experience to meet the physical and mental needs of each individual student. Educational inclusion is not for any one person or student but also for all those students who are not able to function in a normal environment. Some of these students are physically disabled and some students may also be talented and otherwise. Inclusive education is an approach that provides learning opportunities to children with special needs, such as those who are intellectually challenged, visually

impaired, hearing impaired, or gifted. In inclusive education, the intellectual and educational levels of students are first assessed, and then their learning is tailored accordingly. This makes it a system specifically designed for children with special abilities, which is why it is referred to as inclusive education. To improve the quality of Indian education, it is very important to adopt inclusive education and expand its scope. It works to propose democracy. There are possibilities of full realization of the fundamental rights given by its Constitution. Full realization of the right to benefits is possible through inclusive education. Through inclusive education, students get equal opportunities for education. In this, there is no discrimination based on mental, intellectual, and physical ability of the students and it treats everyone equally and works to provide education at one place. Through this, the education level of disabled students and backward class students can be improved. This is a model of special education. It provides equal teaching-learning opportunities to all students. Since it provides equal opportunities for education to all, the objectives of the Right to Education Act, 2009 can also be achieved through it. Inclusive education offers professional opportunities to everyone without discrimination. It refers to an educational system where students of varying abilities and backgrounds learn together in shared classrooms. This approach seeks to include all students, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, or linguistic differences. The goal is to provide equal opportunities for all to engage fully in school life, ensuring they have access to the same resources, environments, and experiences as their peers. The significance of inclusive education is vast, covering social, educational, moral, and economic benefits.

Four main processes are important in inclusive education

Normalization: Normalization is the process that creates a normal social environment for gifted children and youth to learn work as far as possible.

1. **Deinstitutionalization**– Deinstitutionalization is such a process in which more and more talented children and young students are removed from the boundaries, who get education in residential schools and provide opportunities to get education among the masses.
2. **Mainstreaming of Education** - Mainstreaming of education is the process in which gifted children interact with ordinary children through day-to-day education.
3. **Inclusion** - Inclusion is the process which is done to the gifted children in every condition for their education in the general education class. Integration is such a process in which all the characteristics of 'some part' of the society (which is physically handicapped or disabled) are found in the society.

The signs of generalization are

- Children with disabilities have the same rights as other normal children
- Children with disabilities have the same rights for progress and upliftment in the society as other normal children
- Equal opportunities to reach the sphere of life as other citizens and
- Equally in the society are partners in (equality). This process starts with people coming closer and reducing the distance from each other.

This process reduces social distance and promotes cooperation. In this way social inclusion is strengthened and different groups of children become equal participants in the society. In inclusive or inclusive education, gifted children and normal children take full time or half time education in classes together. In this way, meeting, adjustment, coordination between social and educational or both is established. Educationists think that inclusive education is to be established in normal schools for our children. Where they are given help and facilities in special education.

Some main important points of inclusive education: -

Equality and Justice

- **Equal opportunities:** Provides equal opportunities to all students, regardless of their background, ability, or disability.
- **Social Justice:** It ensures that there is no discrimination or bias in education, so that all students can benefit equally.

Social integration

- **Sense of community:** Students from different backgrounds develop a strong sense of community together.
- **Reducing discrimination and discrimination:** Learning together with students from different backgrounds helps reduce isolation and discrimination, thereby creating an inclusive society.

Educational benefits:

- **Enhanced learning opportunities:** Learning together with students of diverse abilities and backgrounds enhances students' educational experiences and learning opportunities.
- **Personal Development:** Inclusive education promotes self-confidence, self-esteem, and personal development of students.

Ethical and legal responsibilities:

- **Right to Equality:** Ensuring that every child has the right to equal education is crucial from an ethical standpoint.
- **Legal compliance:** Legal compliance: In many countries, there is a legal requirement for inclusive education, ensuring that all students have equal access to educational

opportunities.

Economic benefits:

- **Long-term benefits:** An inclusive education system creates a diverse and skilled workforce, which is beneficial to society and the economy.
- **Cost reduction:** Inclusive education can be more cost-effective than separate special education settings.

Personal and social development:

- **Development of life skills:** Life skills like empathy, cooperation, and problem-solving are learned by students through inclusive education.
- **Independence and Self-Reliance:** It helps students to become independent and self-reliant, so that they can achieve success in their life.

Positive attitude and mindset:

- **Inclusive approach:** Inclusive education promotes positive attitudes and mindset in the society, giving equal importance to every individual.
- **Progress of society:** An inclusive society is more progressive and equitable, which is possible only through inclusive education.

The importance of inclusive education lies in the fact that it not only promotes personal and academic development but is also important for the long-term benefits of society and the economy. It is a system that brings together all students to create an equitable, compassionate, and inclusive society.

Principles of inclusive education:

- **Equity:** Ensuring that all students have access to high-quality education and resources, regardless of their abilities or background.
- **Promoting diversity and participation:** Respecting the diversity and worth of students while promoting their active participation in learning and school activities.
- **Individualized Support:** Providing each student with support and accommodations to meet their specific needs, whether they require additional assistance.
- **Collaboration:** Encouraging collaboration between teachers, parents, students, and the community to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment.
- **Flexible curriculum:** Making the curriculum flexible and responsive to the different needs of students, allowing different styles and pace of learning.
- **Professional development:** Providing ongoing training and support to teachers to effectively implement inclusive practices.
- **Positive school climate:** Foster a positive and welcoming school culture that promotes respect, understanding, and acceptance of all students.

Inclusive education is based on the belief that all children have the right to be educated together and that diverse classrooms benefit all students by promoting empathy, understanding, and social cohesion.

Features of inclusive education

- Inclusive education supports the feelings of democracy and works to provide education to the students on that basis only.
- In inclusive education, the number of students is limited to 20-25 and teachers with special training are appointed to teach the students.
- Students gain new experiences through inclusive education. Due to which their confidence has increased.
- Inclusive schools are also inspected over time. Due to

which the inspectors also suggest changes for improvement as per the need.

- In inclusive classes, full care is taken of the facilities of the disabled. Complete arrangements are made for their travel, food, and drink.
- Continuous efforts are made to improve their morale to increase their self-confidence.

Need and importance of inclusive education-

At present, due to increase in population, along with the number of children, their increasing diversity is also becoming a problem. The main objective of inclusive education is to provide equal education to all by taking all these diversities together. This education provides valuable values to children with diversity in language, religion, gender, culture, and social and physical and mental characteristics to learn, relate socially and adjust to each other. Presently inclusive education has become an inevitable necessity. This is very important from the point of view of personal, family, social and national development. The need and importance of inclusive education are as follows-

1. **Improving the quality of education:** Inclusive education is built on the principle of providing not just education for all, but quality education for all. In this system, the curriculum is designed to address the physical, mental, emotional, social, and cultural needs of children. The teaching process is structured in a way that allows each child to fully develop their potential and abilities.
2. **Fulfilling constitutional duties:** The Constitution of India clearly states that no child should be denied education based on factors such as caste, religion, language, physical disability, or gender. To ensure this, the Right to Education Act has been enacted, which guarantees every child's right to education, and no educational institution can refuse to provide it. Inclusive education advocates for education for all children.
3. **Promoting social equality:** Inclusive education is grounded in the principle of equality. As stated in an international conference in Geneva, "school is the only place where all children are participants and all are treated equally." This emphasizes that schools are the only spaces where children, regardless of their caste, religion, gender, community, language, or mental abilities, receive equal education. Inclusive education focuses on providing equal educational opportunities to all children, including those who are physically, mentally, emotionally, or socially challenged.
4. **Development of personal life-** This education is beneficial in the development of personal life. Changing the mindset and outlook of children is the main objective of inclusive education. The center of this education is the child. It has special importance for the cognitive, emotional, social, and mental development of children.
5. **For societal development:** Individuals form the foundation of society, and society cannot exist without the contribution of its members. For society to progress, it is essential to provide education to everyone. A person's life improves through their hard work, understanding, and efforts, with education playing a key role in this process. Therefore, the advancement of society depends on the capabilities of its citizens. Today's imperative is to empower every child through education, ensuring that each child can develop their abilities and skills. Inclusive education ensures that every child in society has access to education, enabling them to secure employment and contribute to building a better society.
6. **Fostering democratic qualities:** Inclusive education plays a key role in nurturing democratic values in children, such as love, goodwill, cooperation, tolerance, and mutual respect. These qualities are cultivated by teaching all students together in the same classroom. This approach emphasizes flexibility and adaptation within the curriculum, teaching methods, interactions, and behaviours, both inside and outside the

classroom, allowing these values to flourish.

7. **Proper adjustment-** Through inclusive education, students learn to adjust to different situations and environments, many studies show that working together regularly creates a positive attitude in the students.
8. **Progress of the nation-** Education is essential for the development and progress of any country. UNESCO gave a report at the conference in Geneva in 2008 and clarified that despite such expansion of primary education, 72 million children are still not able to take admission in school due to poverty or social status. For the development and progress of the nation, it is necessary for human resources to be skilled and this skill can be achieved only through education. If a disabled child receives education, he gets the desired development of all those qualities which are expected from education. If a person or child is educated then he will get employment and work in some field and will fully demonstrate his abilities. Therefore, in inclusive education, education is provided to everyone, so that every child of the country gets education which is necessary for the progress of the nation.
9. **Use of modern technologies** – At present, use of computer, projector, internet etc. has become a common thing. They are also being used in the field of education. Students are made aware of these tools through education. By using this knowledge in his personal life, a person can get employment and develop his knowledge.
10. **Universality of education-** The government makes many schemes for the universality of education, unless these schemes are implemented properly, this goal cannot be achieved. Education (especially primary education) can be made universal only when education is expanded keeping in mind the qualities, level and needs of each child. Inclusive education emphasizes on implementing and supporting government schemes. In this, children of all religions, castes, languages, and physically disabled children are also taught along with normal children.
11. **Satisfactory effect for parents** - Mostly it is seen that with the birth of a disabled or handicapped child, the parents are worried about what kind of education system will be there for the child? This type of disappointment and indifference persists. They look at such children with pity from the very beginning. Earlier, these children had to be sent to special schools far away for education, parents were more worried. Because of the concept of inclusive education, now such children can stay with their families and get education in general schools. Which has a satisfactory effect for parents and guardians.
12. **Increase in employment opportunities** – Education is considered as a helpful tool in earning livelihood. In a country like India, on the one hand, education helps in accumulating knowledge and on the other hand, it is a means of getting employment. An educated person can do any job efficiently, whereas an uneducated person is helpless due to his inability, as a result the cycle of poverty continues. It is our need to spread education and inclusive education is an effort in this direction.

Role of inclusive education

Promoting equality and equity: Ensuring that all students have access to quality education, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, or socio-economic status. Allocates resources to support diverse learning needs and ensure that every student can participate equitably in the educational experience.

Foster a sense of belonging: Encourages interaction and friendship between students from different backgrounds. Promotes a sense of community and belonging and prepares for a multicultural and inclusive society.

Enhancing learning outcomes: Adapting teaching methods to meet

the diverse needs of all students and enhance learning outcomes. Through collaborative learning, students can learn from each other's strengths and support each other's weaknesses.

Developing Life Skills: Social skills help students develop important skills like empathy, communication and collaboration and encourage innovative problem-solving by exposing them to ways of thinking from different perspectives.

Legal and Ethical Responsibilities: Meets legal requirements while complying with laws, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Maintains an ethical responsibility to provide all students with a fair opportunity to succeed.

Economic benefits: preparing all students, including those with disabilities, for employment, contributing to a diverse and skilled workforce. Reduces long-term costs associated with segregated education systems and social exclusion.

Implementation Strategies for Inclusive Education

- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL):** Develops flexible learning environments to accommodate individual learning differences.
- **Professional Development:** Provides ongoing training for educators to effectively teach in inclusive classrooms.
- **Parental and Community Involvement:** Engages families and communities in the educational process to support inclusive practices.
- **Policy Development:** Establishes clear policies and guidelines to promote and sustain inclusive education.

Inclusive education is not just about placing students with disabilities in general education classrooms; it involves systemic change to ensure that all students can participate fully and benefit from the educational experience.

CONCLUSION

In the modern era, it is necessary to expand inclusive education, considering the conditions of the society and the inequalities prevailing in education.

But the reality is that at present equal opportunities of education are not available to all the students. Such students who want to get higher education but their economic or social condition is not such that they can be able to get education. Inclusive education is primarily concerned with students with disabilities, who are included in the mainstream of education through various efforts. In this education system, there is an integrated presentation of various resources which improves the learning level of students with disabilities. In this way, by resorting to integration in inclusive education, the purpose of educating all children together was emphasized, where no discrimination is done with normal and special children. Inclusive education is an ideal form and not a program in which the general teacher is to be able to do special education. In the National Curriculum Framework for School Education, 2000, the NCERT emphasized on inclusive education. In 1994, SEN (Special Needs Education) organized internationally and UNESCO also emphasized on the adoption of inclusive education. In 1948, the universal recommendation of human rights "Education is the right of every child" was talked about internationally in 1990 by EFA (Education for All). The Government of India considered the basic act of education "Education for all" as the main objective of which is to reach education to every child.

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