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Empowering Children with Disabilities-Impact of Inclusive Education

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Abstract

Education is an important empowerment tool for every individual and it should be available to all irrespective of their individual differences. Education should be accessible to all children to ensure equal and sustainable community development. Nevertheless, it is a sad reality that most of the children who are denied access to education are children living with disabilities. These disabilities may be characterized as physical, mental, cognitive and intellectual retardation, developmental deformations, or sensory-related deficiencies.

The goal of education of children with disabilities is the same as that of children without disabilities - to promote children in reaching their full potential and lead productive and dynamic life as active members of their communities. Moving away from exclusion and including all schoolchildren in general education classrooms and schools means providing all students in these classrooms with the exclusive supports and services that they need e.g., access to assistive devices, teacher assistants, and an adapted curriculum—to participate successfully in the classroom. This move is often a significant one that requires time, political will, and an understanding of the benefits of inclusive education for all students.

Keywords: Empowerment, inclusive education, marginalizing factors, disabilities, segregation, quality education.

Introduction

Every Child Counts

Education is regarded as the key to success as well as an empowerment tool for society. It should be conveniently accessible to all children to ensure sustainable community development. Nevertheless, still there are many children who are denied access to education that includes those living with disabilities. These disabilities may be categorized as physical, mental, cognitive and intellectual retardation, developmental deformations, or sensory-related deficiencies.

Having disability is one of the greatest marginalizing aspects in a child's life. Finding ways to meet the learning needs of students with disabilities can be challenging, particularly in schools, districts, regions, and countries with severely limited resources. Inclusive education, which completely engages all students, including students with disabilities or other learning challenges, in quality education has proven mostly effective in helping all students learn, even while challenges to executing inclusive education systems persist.

Children from all over the world are protected by different laws to guarantee access to quality education irrespective of race, gender, status, and disability. In addition, maximum countries globally regard learning as a fundamental human right. Consequently, children regardless of their disability, are entitled to quality education which is often sponsored or offered for free. Disabled children should never be discriminated against or deprived of their fundamental right to quality education.

All-encompassing systems that are inclusive in nature, provide a better-quality education for all children and are instrumental in altering discriminatory approaches. Schools provide the setting for a child's first association with the world outside their families, enabling the growth and development of social relationships and interactions. Social qualities like respect and understanding grow, when students of varied abilities and backgrounds play, socialize,

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and learn together.

Education that isolates and segregates spreads discrimination against traditionally marginalized groups. When education is more inclusive, so are ideas of civic sharing, employment, and community life.

Empower Individuals with Disabilities

Empowerment involves a controller to influence local services to apprise, support, sustain and enable people with disabilities to impact local decision-making processes, take a dynamic role in the services they receive.

Having a say and taking complete control of their lives is important. It benefits the persons with all types of disabilities to accomplish their maximum sustainable independence level as contributory, responsible and equal partakers in society.

Reasons To Empower People with Disabilities -

- Prepare a path for better society
Helping marginalized individuals assists them pursue and achieve their goals, thereby bringing about a good social change and growth in the society. Providing social services like suitable health care for people with disabilities, we ensure more people enter the workforce. This shared effort supports people with disabilities eventually contributes to the growth of economy and improves overall social setting.
- To promote tolerance and mutual respect
An important reason to be attributed is to promote tolerance and mutual respect between people with and without disabilities. Individuals with disabilities face inequality and bias due to their apparent limitations. It is vital to inform and educate general public about various disabilities and how to network with individuals having disabilities with utmost respect. This civic education can be carried out through campaigns and seminars.
With correct and appropriate information, people will be additionally tolerant and kind to special persons, creating an environment of mutual respect. Besides, this awareness will lead to more accepting attitudes in all sectors allowing more people with disabilities to contribute to social growth.
- Eradicate neglect of people with disabilities
There are several categories of disabilities affecting people in different ways. Unfortunately, many are ever so often not aware of a person's disabilities. In cases where persons are unaware of different types of disabilities, the affected persons experience neglect.
Awareness regarding disabilities of individuals will go a long way in their empowerment and success in life. Special provisions should be made to generate programs for providing medical care and shelter for abandoned persons with disabilities.
- Nurture responsible individuals that contribute to society
Society needs to be educated that disabilities does not make a person less functional or less purposeful member of the community. Equal prospects and the corresponding respect develops a sense of confidence in the people with disabilities and cultivates a sense of belonging. Thus, make for positive growth attitudes, and despite disabilities, an individual will pursue and

work on their goals, thus contributing positively to the society.

- Help people with hidden disabilities
Some individuals live with disabilities that they either hide or are unaware about it. That is why it is required to raise awareness of such disabilities so that they come out and get proper assistance. People with less abilities need more care and suitable awareness should be raised to promote relevant assistance. Proper forums should be created to address these problems and empower the lives of special people.
- To bridge the gap and advocate for total equality
For empowerment of people with disabilities, we need to educate everyone the importance of unison as human beings regardless of any kind of limitations. Promoting for the rights and equal treatment of people with disabilities aims at generating a peaceful world with tolerance and acceptance. Acts of kindness unify all human beings, regardless of physical or mental limitations. Working together to empower those who cannot stand up for themselves, we come closer and make it a better world.
- Provide easy access to all services
Individuals with disabilities require access to similar services and opportunities as those without disability e.g., they need to go to school, access health care, and earn for living. Further, they also need access to certain precise services like rehabilitation and assistive devices such as wheelchairs or braille materials. It is imperative to include people with disabilities in the decision-making procedure. This would facilitate access to the required services with ease, thus improving living conditions.
- Inform people with disabilities about their rights and ensure they are protected

Empowering people with disabilities consist of educating them of their rights and privileges, teaching them about the laws and giving appropriate information concerning aspects of their well-being. Most people with disabilities, are not aware of their rights and become subject to abuse and exploitation. If people with disabilities are able to raise their voices and claim their rights, the impact can be truly transformative.

To contribute even more significantly to the empowerment of people with disabilities, governments should include representatives who are themselves disabled, in law-making processes and general decision-making. The opportunities brought about by empowerment programs globally, aim to create an all-inclusive society where people with disabilities are accorded the same respect, love, and kindness as everybody else. Therefore, empowerment is crucial as it unlocks the potential of individuals with disabilities and delivers true change in the society.

Role of Inclusive Schools

Inclusion is a terminology which incorporates every ideology, perspective, and opinion that society offers at each level. When this option is used in the classroom, then teachers and administrators are no longer segregating students based on their educational requirements, learning potential, or physical disabilities. In place of special education, it is inclusive education.

An inclusive classroom permits a student with learning or

physical disability to study together with their peers who do not have similar challenges. It provides universal education to everybody irrespective of who they are, if there is an IEP in place, or there are precise disabilities that must be addressed as an accommodation. Creating an inclusive classroom can vary in complexity because the individual needs of students need to be catered to, but an optimistic approach and informed method can help every person overcome the difficulties which are present.

The journey to becoming an Inclusive School may be long and challenging at times, but ultimately this journey can strengthen a school community and benefit ALL children. "Inclusion" does not simply imply the settlement of students with disabilities in universal education classes. This process must include essential changes in the way a school community ropes in and addresses the specific needs of individual child. Effective models of inclusive schooling not only benefit students with disabilities, but also produces an atmosphere in which every schoolchild, including those who do not have disabilities, has the opportunity to flourish and grow.

Ways To Build Inclusive Educational Practices to Educate All Learners Effectively -

Differentiated teaching augments student engagement.

An important principle of inclusive education is that no two learners are similar, and consequently the inclusive schools give utmost importance on creating opportunities for students to learn and be assessed in diverse ways. Teachers in inclusive schools are required to deliberate a wide range of learning modes (visual, auditory, kinesthetics, etc.) in designing education process. This not only improves the way in which teachers provide care and accommodations for students with disabilities, but it also diversifies the instructive experience of all learners.

Academic supports assist every student access the complete curriculum.

The present education system is based on accountability and high-stakes testing. It is important for teachers to ensure that every student is addressing the suitable and appropriate standards and objectives across the curriculum. By way of their standard, inclusive schools offer academic supports at flexible pacing and grouping, have reading and literacy specialists, tutoring, etc., that generate a helpful environment for all students.

Behavioural supports sustain positive learning environment for everyone.

Consistent behavioural supports throughout the learning environment are vital for an effective inclusive education. This constancy is crucial for the success of learners with emotional or behavioural disabilities in the general education environment, but behavioural supports at the school level also help to create high expectations throughout the school community as an entirety.

Reverence for diversity creates a warm environment for all.

Inclusive education for students with disabilities can only be fruitful when these students actually feel a part of the school community. This necessitates an open and honest dialogue about the differences, and a formal respect for individuals of all backgrounds and capabilities. The

establishment of such a climate benefit one and all by nurturing an environment where students and their families are respected as they are.

Well-organized Inclusive practices make effective use of school's resources.

Previously, special education normally constituted the segregation of students with disabilities for the purpose of specialized education. The system of special education in an isolated setting deprives students with disabilities of interface with their peers and full access to the curriculum. It also involves duplicate systems and resources that are expensive for the schools to maintain. Inclusive education can make better use of school's resources by making best use of the available staff and materials for all students.

Significant Structures of Inclusive Education

The goal of education of children with disabilities is the same as that of children without disabilities i.e., to benefit children in accomplishing their full potential and leading prolific lives as dynamic members of their communities. Children with disabilities quite often necessitate specialized services and supports to master the curriculum being taught. Though, in many countries specialized education services take the form of segregating students with disabilities in different classrooms or schools, with no prospects of engaging with peers without disabilities and often no access to the syllabus that their peers are studying. The shift from segregation towards inclusion of all students in general classroom education means providing entire students with the unique supports and services that they need, like access to assistive devices, teacher assistants, and an adapted curriculum to participate effectively in the classroom. This change is often significant that requires time, political will, and an understanding of the benefits of inclusive education for all learners.

Approach For Inclusive Education –

- Unconditional taking of all children into regular classes and routine life of the school.
- Provide support to children, teachers and classrooms to ensure that all children participate in their schools and classes.
- Look at children with the approach of what they can do rather than what they cannot do.
- Teachers and parents both have high hopes of all children.
- Develop educational goals according to individual ability of the child - same educational goals are not required by children to learn together in regular classes.
- Design schools and classes that will help children learn and achieve to their highest potential.
- Have solid leadership for inclusion from school principals and other related administrators.
- Have teachers/educators who have knowledge about various methodologies of teaching so that children with diverse abilities and strengths can learn together.
- Have principals, teachers, parents and others work together to regulate the most effective ways to provide quality education in an inclusive environment.

Paybacks of Inclusive Education

Over the years, of provision of inclusive education to all children have given away good returns. When practiced

well inclusive education is very important for the following reasons:

- Every child is able to be part of their community and grow a sense of belonging and become better prepared for life in the community as children and adults.
- Provides better prospects for learning. Children with variable abilities are ever so often better motivated when they learn in classes surrounded by other children.
- Expectations of all the children are higher. Successful inclusion goes on to develop a person's strengths and gifts.
- Permits children to work on specific individual goals while being with other students of their own age.
- Encourages the participation and involvement of parents in the education of their children and the events of their local schools.
- Fosters a culture of reverence and belonging. Further it provides opportunity to learn about and accept individual differences.
- Provides every child with opportunities to develop bonding and friendship with one another. Friendships often provide role models and opportunities for growth and development.

Benefits of Inclusive Teaching and Learning

- **Benefits for children with disabilities:**
 - for improving the cognitive, motor, speech, social and emotional development of children by means of communication with peers.
 - purposeful mastery of skills and abilities.
 - emphasis on the strengths and abilities of the student in the learning process.
 - participation and involvement in public life and establishing cordial relations with other children.
- **Benefits for other children:**
 - creation of a tolerant and accepting attitude and normal perception of people with diverse characteristics.
 - establishing and upholding approachable relations with people who are unlike them.
 - social collaboration with people who are dissimilar from them.
 - establishment of a non-standard approach and resourcefulness to achieve a common result.
- **Benefits for teachers:**
 - better understanding of specific individual characteristics of students.
 - become proficient at various pedagogical techniques for effective work taking into account diverse individuals.
 - understanding children's insight and perception for a better understanding of varied situations, and establishment of a holistic picture.

Rationality of Inclusive Education

- Equipping children with adequate knowledge and skills
This will not only benefit the special children but also the society as it ensures that disabled children have sufficient resources to support and improve their lives rather than being dependent for support.
- Offers strong groundwork for self-sufficiency

- Education empowers children to be contingent and rely on oneself in the future. This provides them a sense of individuality and accomplishment, which in turn enhances their self-confidence.
- Skill and ability to successfully use technology
Special students are able to gain and enjoy the benefits technology that offers benefit to them or society as a whole.
- To effectually handle prejudice and stigmatization

Disabled children seek education for diverse reasons, but the most common motive is to be acceptable in the society, which thereby leads to a reduced amount of stigmatization and discrimination

Essentials of Inclusive Education

- **Support of teaching assistants or specialists:** These support staff are likely to be inclusive or divisive. For example, a specialist who aids teachers address the requirements of all students is 'working' inclusively and a specialist who takes students out of class to work with them individually on a regular basis is 'not'.
- **Inclusive curriculum and Programme:** An inclusive curriculum comprise of locally applicable exhortations and contributions by marginalized and minority groups. It avoids two-fold narratives of good and bad, and permits adapting of the curriculum to the learning styles of students with special education needs.
- **Parental participation:** Maximum schools try for certain level of parental involvement and participation, though it is often limited to emails and occasionally parent-teacher conferences. In a diverse school arrangement, inclusion implies thinking about manifold ways to reach out to parents on their own terms.

Execution of inclusive education

In order to make inclusive education a reality the following need to be observed:

- ensure that teachers and educators have the required training, flexibility, and resources to teach students with varied needs and learning patterns
- ensure that both kindergartens and schools have satisfactory and sustainable financial backing so that every activity and services are completely inclusive
- empower parents to proclaim and assert their child's right to education in an inclusive setting
- enable the whole community, counting mainstream and special teachers, social workers, parents, and students to work collectively and take part in the design, delivery, and monitoring of education, thereby redefining inclusive education as a collective responsibility
- hold governments responsible for executing antidiscrimination law and regulation, legal orders for inclusion, and policies to eliminate barriers

Sustaining Inclusive Education

- promote recognition of children's legal rights, like supporting organizations of parents whose children are with special educational needs and disabilities.
- provide finance for empirical research, as well as support for organizations of children with disabilities that is documenting barriers to education

- aid sustainable facilities and services like networking and learning opportunities for schools and NGOs, e.g., teacher associations and parent groups
- fortify civil society groups that give children, parents, and educators a voice, together with parent-led organizations advocating for the rights and inclusion of children with disabilities
- involve with civil society and other personnel in policy development by, providing technical support to the development of significant inclusive education-related laws, policies, and strategies at the national level
- help and support governments and system services to model successful inclusive education provisions that could be scaled up and simulated

Guide for Developing New Teaching / Learning Materials for Inclusive Education

The following specification should be considered when developing new teaching and learning materials -

- Use of language that stresses the individual first and the disability later (e.g., framing- people with disabilities, not disabled people).
- Promote compassion and an overall feeling of understanding for people with disabilities, along with provide precise information about a particular disability.
- Demonstrate respect and acceptance of people with disabilities, and portray them as more similar than different from general individuals (“one of us” rather than “one of them”).
- Highlight the achievements of individuals with disabilities and display their strengths and abilities along with their disabilities.
- Endorse positive image of people with disabilities and characterize them as strong, independent individuals, to whom others can look up to or admire.
- Show valued professions of persons with disabilities and portray them in diverse and dynamic roles.
- Describe individuals with disabilities in cohesive settings and activities e.g., in school, at work, or in the public among peers with and without disabilities.

Conclusion

Globally nations are progressively moving toward adopting inclusive education schemes that are reinforced by policy and best-practice legislative agendas. Even though there is a growing number of accomplishment stories in this area, considerable challenges associated with implementation persist.

For educational reorganization to be efficacious within a country, political will must be combined with backing from teachers, administrators, parents, and the community. Moreover, the incorrect credence that certain children have additional value than others and, thus, merit more opportunities to succeed must be removed. Every child has right to receive a quality education and reach their full potential. The governments must commit to providing education in inclusive settings so that students with disabilities receive the best possible education. It is only inclusive education that can provide both quality education and social development for individuals with disabilities. In fact, it is the most suitable mode for States to guarantee universality, acceptance and non-discrimination in the right to education. Even though challenges in implementing

inclusive education reform persist, they are not impossible, and changes made through such modification will only strengthen the educational system by addressing the requirements of all students.

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