



A Study on Experience Congregates by the School Teachers Towards Inclusive Classroom in Brilliance of RTE ACT 09

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Introduction

In almost every country, inclusive education has emerged as one of the most dominant issues in the education of SWSEN (students with special educational needs). A concise definition of inclusive education is provided by Lipsky & Gartner (1996, 1999), who described it as students with disabilities having full membership in age-appropriate classes in their neighbourhood schools, with appropriate auxiliary aids and support services. To Antia et al. (2002), inclusion denotes a student with a disability unconditionally belonging to and having full membership of a regular classroom in a regular school and its community. They contrasted this with 'integration', or 'mainstreaming', both of which imply that the student with a disability has the status of a visitor, with only conditional access to a regular classroom, but primary membership of a special class or resource room. In recent years, the concept of inclusive education has been broadened to cover not only students with disabilities, but also all students who may be disadvantaged. UNESCO (2003) defined inclusion as a developmental approach that '...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'. Many international declarations have legitimated the idea of inclusion. The principles of inclusive education for example were adopted at the Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) and were restated at the Dakar World Education Forum (2000). Inclusive education means that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups (UNESCO 2003). Inclusive education is not merely about providing access into mainstream school for pupils who have previously been excluded.

RTE act and Inclusion Education

The inclusion of children with disabilities (CWDs) in regular schools and classrooms is a human rights matter with UNCRPD (United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), the first human rights instrument on disability. It has adopted that education shall be without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity and the government shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels, a significant step towards making the education system responsive and responsible for the education of children with disabilities. With India's commitment to UNCRPD, the landmark Act of Right to Education 2009 (RTE) and the amendment in 2012, which has made education the fundamental right for all children in the age group of 6-14 years, has immense significance for the education of children with disabilities. The amendment of RTE in April 2012 has included children with disabilities under the disadvantaged group. In private schools, however, there is lack of clarity regarding the quota for the CWDs within 25% reservation which is for the disadvantaged group and the Supreme Court has passed the order with very strong message of valuing inclusion and social business. Indeed, the RTE Act requires an emphasis on 'equitable' quality. Even our earlier policies have stressed that the quality of education depends on how far it ensures equity; so a system or school that selects children on the basis of their social advantage, actually compromises on equity and therefore on 'quality'. This is why the RTE Act (Section

13) has banned any kind of screening procedure for children and parents at the time of admission, has barred detention or expulsion of a child, and even disallowed the conduct of Board examinations till a child completes elementary schooling (class VIII). The RTE Act (Section 4) stipulates age appropriate admission for out-of-school children by providing Special Training to recognise that children do not enter as 'blank slates' but have rich knowledge from their life experiences which the school must acknowledge. The RTE Act stipulates that all regular teachers of the school, who need to welcome these children in their class after their special training is over, will also need Special Training to understand how to accommodate them without discrimination.

Paradigm shift of school education

Inclusion is about school change to improve the educational system for all students. It means changes in the curriculum, changes in how teachers teach and how students learn, as well as changes in how students with and without special needs interact with and relate to one another. Inclusive education practices reflect the changing culture of contemporary schools with emphasis on active learning, authentic assessment practices, applied curriculum, multi-level instructional approaches, and increased attention to diverse student needs and individualization. The claim is that schools must change so that they become caring, nurturing, and supportive educational communities where the needs of all students and teachers are truly met. Inclusive schools provide an inclusive education and as a result students will be able to learn together. For this to happen, teachers, schools and systems may need to change so that they can better accommodate the diversity of needs that pupils have and that they are included in all aspects of school-life. It also means identifying any barriers within and around the school that hinder learning and participation, and reducing or removing these barriers. Family-school partnerships, collaboration between general and special educators, well-constructed Individualized Education Program plans, Team planning and communication, integrated service deliverance (ISD), ongoing training and staff development etc. are the major factors which can determine the success of inclusive classrooms.

Inclusive education is claimed by its advocates to have many benefits for the students. Instructional time with peers without need helps the learners to learn strategies taught by the teacher. Teachers bring in different ways to teach a lesson for special needs students and peers without need. All of the students in the classroom benefit from this. The students can now learn from the lesson how to help each other. Socialization in the school allows the students to learn communication skills and interaction skills from each other. Students can build friendships from these interactions. The students can also learn about hobbies from each other. Involving peers without need with special needs peers gives the students a positive attitude towards each other. The students are the next generation to be in the workforce; the time in the classroom with the special needs and peers without need will allow them to communicate in the real world someday. Special needs students are included in all aspects of school-life. Special needs students involved in these classrooms will give them the time they need to participate in activities with their peers without need. Awareness should be taught to students that will be in the classroom with the special needs peers. The class can ask questions about what they learned and what they want

to know. This will help when the students are together in the classroom. Positive modeling is important for the students in the classroom. Positive modeling is the teacher showing a good example towards both special needs and peers without need this will help the students to get along more (Doyle, 2008).

Methodology

A self made questionnaire was prepared to investigate the major problems face the school teachers to handle inclusive classroom. A total number of 386 samples were taken from school teachers of the Murshidabad district, West Bengal.

Findings of the study

Some common problems of inclusive classroom are highlighted here after administering the questionnaire among the school teachers.

- The extensive understanding of inclusive education among most school teachers is a narrow one.
- The philosophy of inclusiveness is not well scattered through the process of teachers' preparation for educational practice and consequently is not adequately understood.
- Considering the poor understanding of the philosophy of inclusive education, misunderstanding of appropriate competencies exist.
- Responses from the teachers show incongruence between the philosophy and demands of inclusive education and understand their role and responsibilities.
- The teachers have a problem with the students and as well as parents. Predominant majority of the teachers opined the children hailing from poor background they do not know even the basics of hygiene and social behaviour. So half of teaching time is purportedly consumed for social development of the pupils.
- The teachers assert that what the children do in school is a reflection of what they learnt at home. Teachers found the use of native expressions 'frustrating'.
- The teachers observed that students' home environment was not at all favourable for learning; their parents were illiterate and, therefore, unable to assist in teaching.
- Homework is a source of frustration in many schools, and in many households. Children whose parents help them with their homework do better than other children of similar family background and academic aptitude.

Conclusion

From this study it is clearly visualized that awareness about inclusive education and or inclusive classroom is not up to the mark among school teachers at Murshidabad District. Social consciousness is also needed to the parents of inclusive

pupils. In this paper we have made an attempt to rationalize the changing role for the teachers of inclusive classroom. Some thrust areas where teacher should concentrate themselves are given below:

1. Need centric curricula

Most teachers who teach in an inclusive classroom modify their curricula to meet the needs of their special education students. Curriculum modifications can include the provision of an ICT based text, minimum assignments and summarized chapters of the textbook as well as tools such as animated narrative vignettes organizers and colour-coded chapters to enhance a student's level of comprehension.

2. Effective communication

It is important for inclusion teachers to promote the needs of their special education students by ensuring that resources such as peer tutoring, instructional assistants, team teaching and staff development opportunities are available along with consistent policies that assess the individual student's progress. They should be aware of comprehensive and continuous evaluation technique.

3. Classroom Environment

According to teacher vision, successful inclusion classrooms are those that are taught by teachers who believe in the academic potential of their special needs children. It is also important for teachers to create a safe classroom environment that allows special-needs children to learn alongside their peers while experiencing positive socialization.

4. Behaviour management

Teachers may need to consider a developmentally appropriate method for managing the behaviour of their special-needs students. Common approaches often include a system that allows a student to self-regulate and manage his own behaviour, coupled with a reward system that reinforces the student's positive behaviours.

5. Professional Development

Many inclusion teachers attend in-service training or professional development sessions to perfect their skills in curriculum modification, instructional techniques and collaborative teaching strategies that allow special education teachers, specialists and mainstream teachers to team teach.

6. Community involvement

Teacher should maintain a close relationship with the local community from where the major students get access into school. Active participation in PTA is now mandatory for the teacher as per RTE act 2009. So teacher can make an interaction to the parents more effectively.

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