

Paradigm Shift : From Segregation To Inclusion

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The nation's children are a supremely important asset. Their nurture and solitude are our responsibility.'

"Mankind owes to the child the best it has to give", proclaimed the UN General Assembly on 20th NOV, 1959. In consonance with the UN Declaration our country evolved a national policy for the Welfare of children and declared it in Aug 1974.

Earlier, differently-abled children and those with other special educational needs have experienced exclusion, discrimination and segregation from the mainstream education. Some of them are placed in separate classes or schools. A large number of them are denied access to any education.

Inclusive education is mainly a purposeful effort to provide educational opportunities to all those groups which in the past, have been excluded from having an access to education.

'These groups include children living in poverty, those from ethnic and linguistic minorities, girls (in some societies), children from remote areas and those with disabilities or other special educational needs. The latter are often the most marginalized, both within education and in society, in general' (The Booklet: open file on inclusive education, UNESCO, 2003).

Goal of Inclusion

To prepare students to participate as full and contributing members of the society

Vision of Inclusion

Inclusion is a concept that sees children with special needs as full time participants in and as members of their neighbourhood school and communities (1999). Inclusive Education therefore involves all children learning together with their peers in the same environment.

Idea Behind Inclusion

An Inclusive School or the process of Inclusive Schooling is the ultimate goal of integration and mainstreaming process. Once inclusive schooling is achieved mainstreaming and integration will no longer be necessary since no child will be left out to be integrated into the regular setting.

Society itself is an inclusive community which accepts people of varied abilities or disabilities, race cast, language etc. An Inclusive school should prepare children for this kind of life, the present two - tier system

of education (i.e. segregated and regular) is seen as a disadvantage to people with disabilities, compounding their disabilities.

So all participate together in society from the very beginning. Such a provision inculcates a feeling of confidence among disabled children by providing them access to the formal system of education. Inclusive Education given an opportunity to non - disabled pupils to share with peers who may have special needs and respect their 'difference'. On the other hand, disabled become a part of the school community and get a realistic idea of the Society which is full of diversities, cooperation and competition; limitations and capabilities.

The two - way process, helps to prepare the disabled to become a part of the society and also to prepare the society and schools to receive them and accept them. Integrated Education in general schools was introduced in the 1980s. But the major support for inclusive education came from the 1994 World Conference in Salamanca, Spain on 'SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION'. Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions.

Constitutional Provisions

- Persons With Disabilities Act, 1995...Provides For Education Employment, Creation Of Barrier Free Environment And Social Security Etc.
- Rci Act 1992 Deals With The Development Of Man Power For Providing Rehabilitation.
- National Trust For Welfare Of Persons With Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation And Multiple Disability Act, 1999 For Legal Guardianship Of These Categories And Creation Of Supportive And Permissive Environment For Their Independent Living.
- The Article 45 of Indian Constitution has legalized to provide compulsory education to children of 6-14 years of age.
- The 93rd amendment of the constitution has made elementary education as a fundamental right of

children.

- Right to Education Act 2007.
- National policy for person with Disabilities Act 2006 released by minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India. The intend of the policy is to realize the dream of Inclusive Society.

Present Scenario

After five decades of development education still remains elusive, with about 59 million children between 6- 14 still out of school (of which 35 million are estimated to be girls).

MHRD (Ministry of Human Resource Development) is in the process of developing comprehensive action plan on inclusion of children and youth with disabilities since 21st March, 2005, in consultation with experts, NGO's, disability rights group, parents group and Govt bodies etc.

Main objectives of the action plan :-

- No child is denied admission in mainstream education.
- Special teachers to be trained with in the principles of inclusion.
- Facilities of Govt Hostels for girls with disabilities.
- Home based learning for severe, multiple and intellectually handicapped.
- Promoting distance education.
- Job training and job oriented vocational training.

- All the schools in the country will be made disabled friendly by 2020 and all educational institutions including hostels, libraries, laboratories and buildings will have barrier free access for the disabilities.

Special attention will be given to :-

- Availability of study materials,
- Talking text books
- Reading machines
- Computers with speech software.
- Adequate number of Braille books.
- Sign language interpreters

Transcription services.

NCERT is looking into review of National Curriculum Framework to examine the pedagogical inputs and classroom reorganization required for children with special needs (CWSN).

- Sensitizing teachers to the requirement of CWSN by regular In-Service training in inclusion education.
- An MOU has been signed between the NCTE and RCI, to ensure that, all teachers and other resource persons are able to cope with disability in general class room.
- Selected schools will be converted in to Model Inclusive School.

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