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UNIT I: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Historical Background Of Inclusive Education

History is said to be a chronological description of the persons , institution and societies in terms of their existences and major events of their lives since their inception till date. However, a history of special education and history of exceptionality ,as winzer (1993) observers , are not the same, one deals with educational and institutional arrangements first formally established in the 18th century, the other with the people who have been present in society since the beginnings. Let us have a brief discussion

1. The era of exclusion -extermination and abandonment:- the earlier history of treating disability /exceptionality is almost dominated by the philosophy of exclusion i.e. totally excluding and exterminating the disabled from the main stream of the general population through a quit horrified majors like killing, mutilating, burning exiling, abandoning or making them vanish from the scene some how or the other. Such practices where in vogue through out the globe in almost all the ancient civilization of the world

2. The era of acceptance as a subject amusement and use:- disabled children , who happened to survive these draconian measures on one or the other accounts like undetected conditions, post natal deformities or humanistic tendencies grown in some societies against the brutal measures of infanticide and   started in an era of accepting their existences , not as a normal human being, but as a subject of amusement and means of serving one or the other ulterior motives of the society.

3. The era of prohibition, legal discrimination and witchcraft:- The rise of church as a religious institution in the medieval period led to play a new tone in the treatment of attitudes towards disabilities the bible became a code of ethics in collaboration with churches the rulers in the European society established quite   discriminatory legal laws depriving the disabled people of their rights of inheritance and forbidding there to testify in a course of justice, making a deed, contract note or will.

4. The era of sympathy and asylum -institutionalization:- with the advent of the second phase Christian era, attempts where in vogue to stop the abuse of the disabled children. disabled children where now regarded those poor souls who have been denied opportunities to lead a normal life on account of the annoyance of the Almighty for committing sins. they were now a subject of sympathy rather than of suspension or amusement.

5. The era of isolated setting(special schools):-the renaissance movement originated from Italy in 16th century & then spread throughout the western world in 17th century brought a new era of hope to the disabled population. The spirit of renaissance gave birth to most of the genuine efforts in the direction of special education for the disabled population. In this era, separate schools were established like special schools or special education for deaf, special education for blind, special education for mentally retarded etc.

6. The era of segregated settings special classes:-with the advent of 20th century, these began a new era in the history of the education for

exceptional/disabled in the shape of moving from the isolated setting of special schools to the segregated settings of the special classes within the normal regular schools. It was the result of a new wave of humanism, coupled with the increasing demands of equality of educational opportunities to all children irrespective of their disabilities in the regular schools run by the government or founded or founded and supported by the public money.

7. The era of inclusive setting regular classes:-the era of inclusive settings i.e. educating all types of children whether exceptional or normal together in the regular classes of the mainstream schools, represents the modern era and latest development in the history of special/disability education. Apart from dissatisfaction with continuation of special classes in the regular schools, a new wave of change in the name of upholding human right providing equity & equality of educational opportunities to all children , gave birth to a strong build up in favor of inclusion i.e. placement of exceptional children in regular classroom without discrimination of any sort.

Principles Of Inclusion & Necessary Resources:

Inclusive education is an integral part of general system of education ,hence the principles applicable to general /traditional form of education are equally important in inclusive education with only difference in their methodological difference because of varying characteristics and needs of various types of disabled persons. The principles of inclusive education are as:

1) *Teaching all students:-* Educators should take several different approaches to teaching the same material so that information becomes more interesting and tangible to a greater number of students.

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2) _Exploring multiple identities_:-students who are proud of themselves and excited by the world around them will be more compassionate and understanding people the same is true for educators.

3) There should be well designed individualized education programs.

4) Time for teachers to plan, meet, create and evaluate the students together.

5) Reduced class size based on the severely of the student needs

6) Sufficient funding so that schools will be able to develop programs for students based on student need instead of the availability of funding

7) Collaboration between parents or guardians teachers or para educators, specialist, administration and outside agencies.

If inclusion is to be successful, the following parameters are to be taken care of:

I. Readiness of the general education system to accept responsibility for education of children with disabilities

II. Encouragement provided by the community for including children with disabilities in local schools

III. Readiness of parents of children with disabilities to admit children in local schools

IV. Basic knowledge of general classroom teachers about the education of children with disabilities

V. Admission of all types of disabled children in local schools irrespective of the extent of disability

VI. Enrollment rate of children with disabilities at least on par with that of non disabled children

INCLUSION:

Inclusion is a term which expresses commitment to educate each child to the maximum extent appropriate in the school & the classroom he or she would

otherwise attend. It involves bringing the support services to the child (rather than moving the child to the services) &requires only that the child will benefit from being in the class (rather than having to keep up with the other students). Proponents of inclusion generally favour newer forms of education service delivery.

Inclusion describes much more than the acceptance of children with disabilities/exceptionalities in the mainstream. Inclusive education programmes do not forms on the accommodation of these children into a general education setting, but are focused on the reconstructing of schools to accept &provide for the needs of all students. In other words, no discrimination is made among the exceptional & non exceptional children . all the children in all shades of their exceptionality are   welcome by making necessary arrangements & accommodations for their education in the same school &classes along with their non disabled peers.

Michael F.Giangreco(1997): "Inclusive education is a set of values, principles & practices that seeks more effective & meaningful education for all students, regardless of whether they have exceptionality labels or not".

Stainback &stainback(1992): "Inclusive school or set up may be defined as a place where everyone belongs, is accepted, supports &is supported by his/her peers &other members of the school community in the course of having his/her educational needs met".

NATURE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:

1. It works on the principle of inclusion i,e. including all. So all the students are included in this system of education in their local schools.

2. Here, the general education classroom in the neighbourhood school is regarded as the first placement option for any exceptional child.

3. Exceptional children may get unique opportunities to get education with peers in the same age groups available to those without exceptionality.

4. It aims to integrate &include the education of the disabled children with the general system of education so that education of the disabled &nondisabled may proceed side by side by fulfilling the needs & objectives of both the groups without any differentiation.

5. It tries to bring desired educational opportunities at the doorstep of exceptional children rather than expecting from them to none &try for themselves to avail these opportunities.

6. An inclusion provides a foundation for exceptional in ways that are not possible in special schools & classes.

TYPES OR MODELS OF INCLUSION:

There are two models of inclusion:-

Model of full inclusion: It is the concept of inclusive or integrated mainstreaming education demands the education of the exceptional children in the regular classes &schools in the same way & to the same degree as received by the non disabled children. It is known as full term inclusion. It includes all students, regardless of their exceptionality/disability or normality conditions in a regular classroom/programmes of the school on fulltime as practiced by a school in its regular time table.

*Model of partial inclusion:-*In practical sense, however, such type of full inclusion is neither feasible nor proves more productive from the viewpoints of both the disabled and nondisabled children. Thereby, attempts are made to seek such integration that may work well in prevailing situation and needs of the disabled as

well as non disabled children. It is named as partially inclusive education. It may vary in styles & functioning as:-

- Disabled attend regular classes along with their normal peers. They get required support from the teacher, special educator expert and itinerant teacher within the classroom set up without causing disturbance to the education of the non disabled.

- Disabled students attend special schools meant for their specific special education but gets opportunities for the academic, social &societal interaction with the non disabled in normal schools setup.

INTEGRATION:-

Integration is a concept emerged as a philosophy in antitheses of segregation. It called halt to the system of providing education to the children in segregating settings of special schools & advocated to make provision for their education in the regular schools. In this way , historically,

When disabled children were primarily educated in separate special schools, integration was term carried for describing their successful placement into regular schools.

In this way instead of subjecting the disabled students to a sort of segregation by putting them in separate special schools for their education, their integration(association) with the non disabled population of their peers was targeted to achieve through this new philosophy of integration. It can thus be safely called a proper step in putting the disabled children into the mainstream i.e. the place and the opportunities of getting education and training with the population of the non disabled peers in the regular schools

Mainstreaming:

The concept of mainstreaming has its origin in the work and ideas of **Samuel Gridley Howe,** an American physician who took keen interest in the education of blind and deaf children. As early as 1851, **Howe** had emphasised that blind children should be educated in regular schools because of social advantage of such a setting. He was defending in favour of "exposing the disabled to an educational experience as close to that of non disabled as possible"

In other words he was supporting the mainstreaming the handicapped children in general schools. It was in 1975 that the concept of mainstreaming was embarked in the "Education For All The Handicapped Act (U.S.A)".

Mainstreaming recommends to an educational placement procedure & process in which disabled children are educated in the least restrictive environment to satisfactory provide for their educational &related needs.

According to **Kauffman et-al (1975),"**Mainstreaming refers to the temporal, instructional &social integration of eligible exceptional children with normal peers based on an ongoing, individually determined, educational planning & programming process &requires clarifications of responsibility among regular &special education, administration, instructional &supportive personal."

Wang(1981),"The term mainstreaming is used to mean an integration of regular &exceptional children in a school setting where all children share the same resources &opportunities for learning on a fulltime basis."

Mainstreaming depends upon the following conditions:-

1) There should be temporal, social &instructional integration of handicapped children.

2) Educational programmes for the mainstreamed handicapped children should be planned with proper care to fulfill their special educational needs.

3) Supportive services &personal should be provide both to the children &regular class teacher.

4) The regular class teacher should lastly take the responsibility of educating the handicapped children in the general school.

5) Only mildly handicapped children should be exposed to mainstreaming situation.

6) The regular teachers must accept &agree to implement mainstreaming in their classrooms & schools.

7) In all class, parents should be involved in the case, training &placement of their handicapped children.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

It is the right of every child to get education. The society needs variety of people for the progress of humanity. Inclusive education becomes important to fulfill this. Let us observe the need for inclusive education from different angles.

Human Rights

All children have the right to learn together.

Education

Research shows children do better, academically and socially in inclusive settings. Given commitment and support, inclusive education is a more efficient use of educational resources.

Social

All children develop relationships with variety of people around them and this

prepares them for life in the mainstream.

Inclusion has the potential to reduce fear and build friendship

Mutual respect, understanding and compassion increases among the fellow individuals.

Psychological

It encourages children to stay with their families and communities.

The school atmosphere can improve to the benefit of all the learners.

The practice can help overcome discrimination which is widespread in every sphere of society

It promotes wider inclusion of individuals for the development of the nation

FACTORS AFFECTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION.

As we all know, inclusion is a global trend in education. For the success of this programme implementing agencies have to accept the rights of children. Schools should provide for the needs of all the children in their communities, regardless of their ability. The idea seems simple but there are significant barriers to achieving these goals. There are several difficulties on the path of fulfilling the vision of inclusive education some of which are discussed in this section.

DIVERSITY AMONG THE LEARNERS

There is so much of diversity among a group of children belonging to the same age group. Children differ with regard to their home background, motivation and ability to learn, personal attributes, attitudes, interests and commitments. This wide variety to be addressed as a group for instruction is a difficult task.

PREPAREDNESS OF TEACHERS

Identifying that the child has a different need itself is a skill which a teacher has to be equipped with. But the teacher preparation programme hardly addresses this issue. To tackle diversity in the classroom on a daily basis, certain specific training is required by teachers. In our country this requirement is not fulfilled. Hence it poses a threat to the implementation of inclusive education.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The location, space and arrangement of a classroom are essential factors to help inclusive education. Most schools of our country are devoid of basic facilities suitable for learning. The location away from noise, rooms with proper ventilation, space for free movement inside and outside of the classroom, grounds to play and provision for other co curricular activities are very essential to support inclusive education.

AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

Our schools have not yet explored the availability of resources to support children in their process of learning. The teacher is not equipped with the skill of making use of the variety of learning materials. Teachers find it difficult to tackle the diverse learning need in the classroom without appropriate materials. The support of professionals is very essential to handle some categories of children. Clinical psychologists, social workers, audiologists, speech language pathologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists are required to help in the process of education of some of the children. But we have limited people working in the field. Getting expertise to schools is a remote chance especially in rural areas.

"Alone we do so little, together we do so much" — Helen Keller

EVALUATION SYSTEM

There is so much of rigidity in our pattern of evaluation, that the child is assessed wrongly. For diverse learner, there is need to use diversified evaluation system. If a child is not able to write, all other abilities of the child will go unnoticed. If the child requires some other mode of evaluation other than reading and writing, we are not giving that option to children. This leads the learner to frustration and they drop out of the education system, a major deterrent to the cause of inclusive education. Every one is a genius. But if you judge afish on its ability to climb the tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.

BENEFITS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The benefits of inclusive education are numerous for both students with and without disabilities.

Benefits of Inclusion for Students With Disabilities

- ✓ Friendships.
- ✓ Increased social initiations, relationships and networks.
- ✓ Peer role models for academic, social and behavior skills.
- ✓ Increased achievement of IEP goals.
- ✓ Greater access to general curriculum.
- ✓ Enhanced skill acquisition and generalization.
- ✓ Increased inclusion in future environments.
- ✓ Greater opportunities for interactions.
- ✓ Higher expectations.
- ✓ Increased school staff collaboration.
- ✓ Increased parent participation.

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- ✓ Families are more integrated into community.

<u>Benefits of Inclusion for Students Without Disabilities.</u>

- ✓ Meaningful friendships.
- ✓ Increased appreciation and acceptance of individual differences.
- ✓ Increased understanding and acceptance of diversity.
- ✓ Respect for all people.
- ✓ Prepares all students for adult life in an inclusive society.
- ✓ Opportunities to master activities by practicing and teaching others.
- ✓ Greater academic outcomes

BARRIERS TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education does away with the practice of segregating students with learning and/or physical challenges from the rest of the student body. While the practice of inclusion places extra demands on students and facility logistics, there are numerous benefits to all students, both disabled and non-disabled.

Teachers in inclusive classrooms must incorporate a variety of teaching methods in order to best reach students of varying learning abilities. This has benefits even for those students who would be placed in a traditional classroom, as this increases their engagement in the learning process. Even gifted and accelerated learners benefit from an environment that stresses responsiveness from all students.

Perhaps most importantly, inclusive classrooms encourage open and frank dialogue about differences as well as a respect for those with different abilities, cultural backgrounds and needs.

Despite the benefits, there still are many barriers to the implementation of inclusive education. A UNESCO article, "Inclusive Education," outlined many of them, including:

Attitudes: Societal norms often are the biggest barrier to inclusion. Old attitudes die hard, and many still resist the accommodation of students with disabilities and learning issues, as well as those from minority cultures. Prejudices against those with differences can lead to discrimination, which inhibits the educational process. The challenges of inclusive education might be blamed on the students' challenges instead of the shortcomings of the educational system.

Physical Barriers: In some districts, students with physical disabilities are expected to attend schools that are inaccessible to them. In economically-deprived school systems, especially those in rural areas, dilapidated and poorly-cared-for buildings can restrict accessibility. Some of these facilities are not safe or healthy for any students. Many schools don't have the facilities to properly accommodate students with special needs, and local governments lack either the funds or the resolve to provide financial help. Environmental barriers can include doors, passageways, stairs and ramps, and recreational areas. These can create a barrier for some students to simply enter the school building or classroom.

Curriculum: A rigid curriculum that does not allow for experimentation or the use of different teaching methods can be an enormous barrier to inclusion. Study plans that don't recognize different styles of learning hinder the school experience for all students, even those not traditionally recognized as having physical or mental challenges.

Teachers: Teachers who are not trained or who are unwilling or unenthusiastic about working with differently-abled students are a drawback to successful

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inclusion. Training often falls short of real effectiveness, and instructors already straining under large workloads may resent the added duties of coming up with different approaches for the same lessons.

Language and communication: Many students are expected to learn while being taught in a language that is new and in some cases unfamiliar to them. This is obviously a significant barrier to successful learning. Too often, these students face discrimination and low expectations.

Socio-economic factors: Areas that are traditionally poor and those with higher-than-average unemployment rates tend to have schools that reflect that environment, such as run-down facilities, students who are unable to afford basic necessities and other barriers to the learning process. Violence, poor health services, and other social factors make create barriers even for traditional learners, and these challenges make inclusion all but impossible.

Funding: Adequate funding is a necessity for inclusion and yet it is rare. Schools often lack adequate facilities, qualified and properly-trained teachers and other staff members, educational materials and general support. Sadly, lack of resources is pervasive throughout many educational systems.

Organization of the Education System: Centralized education systems are rarely conducive to positive change and initiative. Decisions come from the school system's high-level authorities whose initiatives focus on employee compliance more than quality learning. The top levels of the organization may have little or no idea about the realities teachers face on a daily basis.

Policies as Barriers: Many policy makers don't understand or believe in inclusive education, and these leaders can stonewall efforts to make school policies more inclusive. This can exclude whole groups of learners from the mainstream

educational system, thereby preventing them from enjoying the same opportunities for education and employment afforded to traditional students.

Overcoming the many barriers to inclusive education will require additional funding, but even more importantly, it requires the change of old and outdated attitudes. Studies support what many classroom teachers know by experience: that the benefits inclusion provides to all students easily justifies the effort.