UNIT II: INCLUSIVE PRACTICES & INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

DEFINE DIFFERNTIATION

Differentiating instruction means changing the pace, level or kind of instruction you provide in response to an individual learners needs, styles and, interests. Good differentiating means looking at how well you're providing variety and challenge in learning. Differentiation emphasizes on Identifying who among your learners is best served by your current lesson plans and modifying those plans if needed, so more learners can be successful.

CURRICULUM DIFFERENTIATION

- ✓ A key strategy for responding to diversity with special focus on Special children.
- ✓ Takes into account differences in learners' ability levels, interests, background and Special attention to special children.
- ✓ Modification, changing, adapting, extending and varying aspects of the curriculum.
- ✓ Aspects of the curriculum to be Differentiated:
  - Content.
  - Teaching methodologies.
  - Learning environment.
  - Assessment.

Differentiating the Learning Environment

Purpose:

To ensure that the learning environment is as conducive and as stimulating as possible for all learners.

The learning environment is two-dimensional and differentiation should happen sometimes simultaneously in each:

Psychosocial – psychological and social factors with a bearing to satisfaction, wellbeing, and ability to perform effectively

Physical – classroom space, arrangement of furniture, noise level, class size, classroom displays, resources, movement etc.

Differentiating the learning environment means paying attention to psychological, social and physical factors.

Differentiating Teaching Methods

Purpose:
- ✓ To ensure responsiveness to different levels at which learners(Normal as well as special) operate.
- ✓ To maximise participation of learners (Normal as well as Special)in learning activities.

Aspects of teaching methodologies that we Differentiate:
- ✓ Learning materials
- ✓ Methods of presentation
- ✓ Learning activities
- ✓ Lesson organisations

Some Characteristics.
- ✓ Start teaching from where children are.
- ✓ Provide specific ways for each child(Normal as well as Special) to learn, don't assume that all children learn in the same way.
- ✓ There must be an element of challenge for every child in every learning opportunity.
- ✓ All activities should be equally interesting, important and engaging.
- ✓ Allow for some choice to give children ownership of their learning.

ROLE OF TEACHER IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
- ✓ Identification of the children with disabilities in the classroom.
- ✓ Referring the identified to the experts for further examination and treatment.
- ✓ Accepting the children with disabilities.
- ✓ Developing positive attitude between normal and disabled children.

- ✓ Placing the children in the classroom in proper places so that they feel comfortable and are benefited by the classroom interaction.
- ✓ Removing architectural barriers wherever possible so that children with disabilities move independently.
- ✓ Involving the children with disabilities in almost all the activities of the classroom.
- ✓ Making suitable adaptation in the curriculum transaction so that the children with disabilities learn according to their ability.
- ✓ Preparations of teaching aids/adaptation of teaching aids which will help the children with disabilities learn.
- ✓ Parental guidance and counselling and public awareness programme through school activities.
- ✓ Collaborating with medical and physiological pannals, social works, parents and special teachers.
- ✓ Construction of achievement and diagnostic tool.
- ✓ Adaptation in evaluation for children with special needs.
- ✓ Providing remedial instruction to the children who require it.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE OF DIVERSE LEARNERS OF INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

Learners' experiences within inclusive classrooms have changed to some extent with attempts at implementing inclusive education that accommodates diverse learner needs, but the classroom teaching traditions that existed under the education system still persist. The majority of learners with special needs still find themselves alienated and excluded from full access to the curriculum. This is contrary to the present education system which is rooted in the principles of social justice and inclusivity in the classroom which hinders effective implementation of Inclusive curriculum.

The classroom is structured for the able learners; there must be a point where we start accounting for the differences. Structures in our societies favor a particular group of people. The norm in learning is reading and writing not otherwise. Therefore, the school disables them by putting the measure of success on reading and writing and yet there are many ways of learning including indigenous learning.

Large numbers of learners who experience learning difficulties and physical disability are included and are being accommodated in classrooms, hence, the

context in which learning and teaching takes place requires a considerable change to cater for learners" diverse needs in the classroom. Lomofsky, Roberts, and Mvambi, (1999) alluded to the above idea when they stated that teaching has become more demanding and challenging to educators. This refers to a different way of teaching that includes learners who have been marginalized by the previous education system.

Learners" experiences in the classroom are viewed according to Lorenz's (2002) assertion that children bring to the classroom knowledge and skills that have been learnt from home and society. Considering this idea learners construct knowledge in the classroom by referring or building on the knowledge and skills learnt from home and their society. The knowledge learners bring to school incorporates values and norms inherent in their society. Hence, the learner must be able to identify himself/herself in the activities taking place in the classroom in such a way that learners" experiences facilitates the optimal development of the learner towards his/her full academic potential.

Bennett and Dunne (2001) advocate the idea that what children learn in the classroom depends to a large extent on what they already know. This echoes Vygotsky"s theory (cited in Rowland 2006) that learning progresses from the known to the unknown: the learner begins formal learning at school having some knowledge that was acquired informally at home or in the community. Formal learning at school thus progresses from what the learner already knows towards construction of new knowledge.

Lorenz (2002) stated that the learner in the inclusive classroom acquires new skills; develops independence in learning and behavior; develops age-appropriate behavior and develops friendly relations with peers in the classroom community. These factors are important for nation building, since the primary aim of education is to prepare learners to become fully functional, tolerant and peace-loving citizens.

A study done by Selvum (2004) in a school revealed that the majority of learners who experience learning difficulties or are physically disabled have negative experiences in the classroom. Learners are being laughed at by their peers and are labeled and excluded in peer group tasks and activities assigned in the classroom. These issues raise the questions of why the learners encounter such challenges; what the root causes of this situation are and the impact on the implementation of Inclusive Education in the International context.

PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES

SPECAIL EDUCATION 2000: The Government's aim is to achieve, over the next decade, a world class education system that provides learning opportunities of equal quality for all students."

There are different teaching strategies like cooperative learning and Peer Tutoring

COOPERATIVE LEARNING
A set of teaching strategies in which students with differing skills and achievement levels learn together and take responsibility for both individual and group achievement. (*John Medcalf, 1995*)

Co-operative learning background
- ✓ Pioneered by Roger and David Johnson – USin 1970s
- ✓ Used extensively all levels education system
- ✓ Large body of research investigating efficacy
  - – predominantly positive results

Rationale
- ✓ Co-operative group work accommodates different needs and values individuals' differences
- ✓ Inclusive strategy -– everyone in class a member of a group and everybody participates in some way
- ✓ Increases overall student involvement, 'on-task' rate
- ✓ Fosters teamwork and teaches 'working together' skills. Teamwork an important life skill eg, parenting, workplace 'teams'

Five basic principles of cooperative learning
(Johnson and Johnson)
- ✓ Positive interdependence (P)
- ✓ Individual accountability (I)
- ✓ Group reflections (G)
- ✓ Small group skills (S)
- ✓ Face-to-face interaction (F)

Positive interdependence
- ✓ Learning activity structured so that group cannot succeed without each member participating / succeeding
- ✓ Established through, for example:

- group goal
- group reward
- shared materials/resources
- assigned roles in group.

Individual accountability

✓ Every member of group accountable for learning the material and/or understanding task and helping others to learn and/or understand too

✓ Established by, for example:

- randomly selecting one member to report back
- assessing individuals following group work
- everyone a specific role

Group reflection

✓ Reflecting on how well group is functioning achieving goals, working together

✓ Achieved by, for example:

- group debriefing at end of activity
- group rating quality of work/use of skills
- teacher observing and giving feedback
- student observers giving feedback

Small group skills

✓ Training in how to work well together, how to collaborate

✓ Teach specific skills, for example:

- moving into groups
- listening to others
- encouraging others
- resolving conflicts

Face-to-face interaction

✓ Students interact over shared learning activity

✓ Everyone included

✓ Active participation encouraged by:

- way in which activities are structured
- way in which skills (for example, asking questions, giving or receiving explanations) are taught and monitored

Co-operative skills

✓ Need to be

- taught
- practised
- monitored

- ✓ Hierarchy of skills – *Johnson and Johnson 4 Fs*
- ✓ Forming
  - moving without noise
  - staying within the group
- ✓ Functioning
  - asking for help
  - expressing support
- ✓ Formulating
  - summarising
  - seeking elaboration
- ✓ Fermenting
  - criticising ideas, not people
  - solving conflicts

PEER TUTORING
He / she who teaches learns.

What is peer tutoring?
- ✓ A type of co-operative learning – two students working together
- ✓ A more skilled 'tutor' helping a less skilled 'tutee' on task
- ✓ Effective for wide range of students with variety of needs
- ✓ Can be used in variety of curriculum areas, for example, maths, written language, reading

Types of peer tutoring
- ✓ Cross age peer tutoring
- ✓ Same age peer tutoring
- ✓ Whole class peer tutoring (whole class working in pairs for some activities)
- ✓ School wide peer tutoring (across levels)

RATIONALE
- ✓ Based on theory of responsive social contexts for learning:
  - learner has greater control in learning process
  - learner has opportunities to initiate as well as respond
  - learner receives frequent feedback on responses
- ✓ Helps teacher cater for range of individual needs.
- ✓ Capitalises on natural social and helping relationships between students
- ✓ Cost effective – no 'outside' resources required
- ✓ Increases opportunities for individualised instruction in the classroom

- ✓ Increases amount of instruction for individuals, for example, mileage in reading

PEER TUTORING SKILLS

- ✓ Showing interest
- ✓ Praising success
- ✓ Offering support, fading as independence increases
- ✓ Encouraging attempts
- ✓ Correcting errors without criticising etc.

(To be modelled and monitored by teacher)