Philosophy of Inclusion – Problems and Challenges

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Abstract
The right of every child to education is proclaimed in The Universal Declaration of Human Right; besides, education is also a fundamental human right. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Children all stipulate that the right of everyone to education is the responsibility of the whole world. As is well known the most difficult point in universalizing the compulsory education lies in education for the disabled, especially in poverty-stricken areas. If a breakthrough can be made in this respect, it will be conducive to achieving the ideal of education for the whole world. Education for the disabled has undergone three stages, i.e., isolation, integration and inclusion. In developing areas, education for the disabled should follow all the three stages step by step or it is possible to go directly to inclusive education, is the concern in question. The above is a common problem that needs further exploration. An important prerequisite for inclusive education is have respect for differences, respect for different learning styles, variations in methods, open and flexible curricula and welcoming each and every child. In other words, inclusive schools are learner-centered and child-friendly. There is also a need to shift in perspectives and values so that diversity is appreciated and teachers are given skills to provide all children, including those with different learning needs, quality education. All parents want their children to be accepted by their peers, have friends and lead "regular" lives. Inclusive settings can make this vision a reality for many children with disabilities. When children attend classes that reflect the similarities and differences of people in the real world, they learn to appreciate diversity. This paper attempts to analyze the concept, philosophy, problems and challenges of inclusive education towards achievement of equity for students with disabilities. It will also explain the nature of barriers that are confronted in inclusive education and suggest the measures for its successful implementation. The challenge of getting all children into school has been put on the political agenda in many countries and is now accorded a global status in educational institutions.

Keywords: Philosophy of Inclusion, Problems & Challenges

Introduction

'Including the Excluded' - "Inclusion is about the intentional building of relationships where difference is welcomed and all benefit."

Inclusion is not a new concept in education. Related terms with a longer history include mainstreaming, integration, normalization, least restrictive environment, deinstitutionalization, and regular education initiative. Some use several of these terms interchangeably; others make distinctions. Admittedly, much of the confusion over the issue of inclusion stems from the lax usage of several of these related terms when important differences in meaning exist, especially among the most common-mainstreaming, integration, inclusion, and full inclusion.

The goal is to eliminate all barriers in order to achieve learning. (Lipski, 1998). Inclusion promotes quality and equity education for all, without any type of barrier or exclusion, including those who may be potentially marginalized due to disability, gender, emotional/ behavioral problems, family background, ethnicity, giftedness, migrants, poverty, hearing or visual impairment, language delay, among others.

The purpose of education is to ensure that all students gain access to knowledge, skills, and information that will prepare them to contribute to one's communities and workplaces. The central purpose becomes more challenging as schools accommodate students with increasingly diverse backgrounds and abilities. As we strive to meet these challenges, the involvement and cooperation of educators, parents, and community leaders is vital for the creation of better and more inclusive schools. Inclusion is an educational approach and philosophy that provides all students with community membership and greater opportunities for academic and social achievement. Inclusion is about making sure that each and every student feels welcome and that their unique needs and learning styles are attended to and valued.

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 mean the placement of students with disabilities in general education classes. This process must incorporate fundamental change in the way a school community supports and addresses the individual needs of each child. As such, effective models of inclusive education not only benefit students with disabilities, but also create an environment in which every student, including those who do not have disabilities, has the opportunity to flourish.

"Inclusive education is concerned with removing all barriers to learning, and with the participation of all learners vulnerable to exclusion and marginalization. It is a strategic approach designed to facilitate learning success for all children. It addresses the common goals of

decreasing and overcoming all exclusion from the human right to education, at least at the elementary level, and enhancing access, participation and learning success in quality basic education for all." – Susie Miles
"Together We Learn Better: Inclusive Schools Benefit All Children".

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (1994) asserts that:" Regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discrimination, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all"

Historically, attempts towards development and ensuring equality and justice for all have been done to conform to the norms and systems of the society. Quality basic education is a fundamental human right. However, many continue to be denied this right and the opportunity to enjoy its many benefits because of limited access to the participation in the education system. Through inclusive education, one can respond to the diversity of needs of all learners and thereby reducing exclusion to and within education system. Hence, inclusive education is a means to achieve fundamental right to education for all. An inclusive learning environment is one in which all those participating feel able to actively engage, feel safe and feel welcome. An inclusive learning environment also acknowledges and celebrates difference as part of everyday life.

Keating (1996) [13] successful change or transformation in the next century depends on the creation of a "learning society". The first step to achieve this goal is to provide learning opportunities that will foster the full development of learning potential in all learners. This has an implication for providing personally challenging, individually appropriate educational program to all students, even those with exceptional learning needs. This is possible only in a flexible education system that assimilates the needs of a diverse range of learners and adapts itself to meet these needs.

According to the (2011) Global Monitoring Report, "Education should allow children to reach their fullest potential in terms of cognitive, emotional and creative capacities". 'Education for all' means ensuring that all children have access to basic education of good quality by creating an environment in where learners both able and enabled to learn can learn. Such an environment must be inclusive, effective, friendly and welcoming to all learners.

Booth (1996) [5] has seen inclusion as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children

Hence, Inclusive Education has been seen both as getting learners into and through learning institution by developing schools that are responsive to the actual, diverse needs of teach communities (UNESCO, 1994) [28]. Hence, it can be seen as a device for both access and quality which are also fundamental aspirations of EFA action frameworks. Inclusive Education approach doesn't only provide the basic human right to education but also dignity which is often being linked with the socio economic status. Through, inclusive education the learners gets a chance for not only getting into the system but also a support to complete it successfully.

In the broadest sense it is an approach which enables both teachers and learners to feel comfortable with diversity and to see it as a challenge and enrichment in the learning environment, rather than a problem. It also relieves individuals from the clutches of marginalization and exclusion.

One of the important parameter for quality education is to welcome the diversity and to provide flexibility in learning. Also, we have learnt that the quality of learning can be enhanced by the diversity of student involvement. An inclusive approach to education also strives to promote quality in the classroom by putting flexibility in terms of offering every individual a relevant education through a range of methods and individualized learning and variation in optimal opportunities for development personal growth of all learners.

Researchers have also shown that Inclusive education results in improved social development and academic outcomes for all learners as it provides opportunity to get exposed to the real world which leads to the development of social skills and better social interactions. It also provides platform to the non-disabled peers adopt positive attitudes, tolerance and actions towards learners with disabilities. Thus, inclusive education lays the foundation to an inclusive society and participatory society by accepting, respecting and celebrating diversity.

Philosophy of Inclusion

Inclusion is the key stone of today's education which applies to accommodate/include all human beings, thus the full spectrum of diverse abilities, within one system, in such a manner that all involved can be assured of successful, equal and quality participation in real- life experiences from birth to the grave. This implies that all have to perceive and treat themselves and others as dignified human beings, in enhancing human potential maximally and in succeeding to achieve whatever outcome is envisaged and humanly possible. (Burden).
"The goal of an inclusive education system is to provide all students with the most appropriate learning environments and opportunities for them to best achieve their potential." (Alberta Education, 2010)

Inclusion begins with recognising that all children and their families have the right to access high quality early childhood education. This right is not affected by disability. Inclusive practices are intended to identify and remove barriers to full acceptance, participation and learning for all children. Inclusion recognises that many challenges associated with disability are embedded in socio-cultural attitudes and practices. Inclusive practices aim to alter policy, organisation, structure and pedagogy so children with special needs can take their rightful place as full and valued members of their education communities. Inclusion does not entail a one- size- fits- all "mainstream" approach, but seeks to recognise and respond to diversity, without isolating children with special needs and removing them from everyday activities at the service. Inclusive practices allow educators to "support individual needs within the regular context." Inclusive educators think about the child as a learner.

Inclusive Education supports this through collaborating with teachers, students and parents in the identification of students'

exceptional needs and with the development of appropriate educational programs to meet those needs. Whatever is determined on the basis of diagnosis and assessment of student needs, the purpose for each student remains the same: to ensure individual student success through effective education.

Participation of students with exceptional needs in inclusive settings is based on the philosophy of equality, sharing, participation and the worth and dignity of individuals. This philosophy is based on the belief that all children can learn and reach their full potential given opportunity, effective teaching and appropriate resources.

Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel accepted, valued, and safe. An inclusive community consciously evolves to meet the changing needs of its members. Through recognition and support, an inclusive community provides meaningful involvement and equal access to the benefits of citizenship. We all embrace inclusion as a means of enhancing the well-being of every member of the community. By working together, we strengthen our capacity to provide the foundation for a richer future for all of us.

Inclusion philosophy agrees that students with exceptional needs must be full participants in school and society. The regular classroom is viewed as the most enabling environment for the student with exceptional needs because of the increased opportunity to participate with same-aged peers without exceptional needs. Inclusion, by definition, refers not merely to setting, but to specially designed instruction and support for students with special supports and service needs in regular classrooms and community schools. Often, meeting the learning needs on either end of the spectrum improves the quality of education for everyone in the classroom, as well as promoting the awareness and acceptance of diversity. Determination of the most enabling environment and individual program planning is a consultative, collaborative process involving the student (when appropriate), parents, principal, teachers, teaching assistants, specialized support service professionals and community members, as appropriate. Through recognition and support, an inclusive community provides meaningful involvement and equal access to the benefits of citizenship. (Purdue, 2009) [25]

Inclusion as a means of enhancing the well-being of every member of the community by working together, we strengthen our capacity to provide the foundation for a richer future for all of us. The philosophy of inclusion goes beyond the idea of physical location and incorporates basic values and a belief system that promotes the participation, belonging and interaction.

Problems or Barriers with Inclusion in the Classroom
Despite the principles of inclusion underlying legislation and policy and its inherent presence in the documents research suggests that inclusion in actual practice varies widely from service to service. Children with special needs are often seen as requiring special education separate to the mainstream. This limits their attendance and full participation in the regular life of the service. Separation gives rise to a number of barriers to inclusion, including hostility from other children's parents, resourcing issues, and a lack of knowledge about how to include children with special needs.

Most people like to talk about the benefits of an inclusion classroom. Those are numerous, popular, and easy to list. But the problems with inclusive classrooms are overlooked by the educational fraternity. It is almost as if it is taboo to even suggest there *are* problems with creating an inclusive classroom. However, as any mainstream or special education teacher can tell you, there are indeed problems.

One of the greatest problems faced by the world today is the growing number of individuals who are excluded from meaningful participation in the economic, social, political and cultural life of the society. It sends a warning to governments that goals of equality for all (EFA) can't be met by 2015 if the problem of inequality in education is not dealt properly, as education leads to an empowered and fulfilled life.

While we cannot neglect the importance of inclusive education it remains unanswered why the practice of inclusive education is presenting problems. It appears that it is both at the level of government policy but rather at the level of implementation. While the policy states that all children should go to school – and governments are enforcing this rule – in many cases quality learning is not taking place, which is contradictory to the ethos of inclusive education. The reasons for the non-implementation of the inclusive education in India, is because of various barriers which according to Tim Lore Man (2005) [15] are both external and as well as internal. The external barriers are confronted before coming to and getting enrolled in schools, which includes physical location of schools, non-availability of school, social stigmatization or economic conditions of the learners.

The internal barriers are mostly psychological barriers like self-concept, confidence etc which are sometimes imposed by the external factors and first step to remove the internal barriers is to remove the external barriers. The following are some of the external barriers.

1 Attitudinal barriers
It has been noted that disabled students suffer from physical bullying, or emotional bullying. These negative attitudes results in social discrimination and thus leads to isolation, which produces barriers to inclusion. Regarding disabled children some regions still maintain established beliefs that educating the disabled is pointless. It is sad to note here that these barriers are caused by society, which is more serious to any particular medical impairment. The isolation which results from exclusion closes the doors of real learning. The negative attitudes often develop due to lack of knowledge. Along with information about disability or condition, their requirements must be provided to peers, school staff and teachers as well. Increasing interactions between learners with special needs and community through organization of fairs, meetings etc. It is also very important to counsel the parents of these learners, especially in rural areas about the importance of providing education for developing self-reliant individuals. There is also a need to shift in perspectives and values so that diversity is appreciated and teachers are given skills to provide all children, including those with different learning needs, quality education.

Also, at the policy level, it should be mandatory for all to educate about disability, so that a responsive individuals who respects disability could be developed.

2 Physical barriers
Along with the attitudinal barriers which are faced by the learners on the daily basis, another important barrier is the

physical barriers, which includes school buildings, playgrounds, washrooms, library etc. Apart from this, the majority of schools are physically inaccessible to many learners because of poor buildings, particularly rural areas. Since most schools are not equipped to respond to special needs, poses blockage for learners in physically getting into school. For example, many of the students require a personal assistant for such basic activities as taking lunch in recess, personal care, remedial education efforts. Most school buildings don't respond to the requirement of these learners properly. For example, if there is a ramp, sometimes it is too steep, often the doors were too heavy for the student to open unaided which impedes the access.

Some services in research studies considered themselves insufficiently resourced to provide the kinds of intervention necessary for effective inclusion. In this case, the attendance of children with special needs was seen as a resourcing issue rather than a human rights issue. Researchers have suggested that some services use resourcing as an excuse to exclude children with special needs who they would prefer not to teach. However, there is also acknowledgement of external constraints by researchers who state that evidence "highlights the facts that inadequate resourcing, especially funding, is one of the main barriers to inclusion."

Hence, it is important for implementing the inclusive education in schools, it is important to overcome such physical barriers. Along with basic changes in the architectural designs such as widening doorways, removing unnecessary doors, installing proper ramps, technology could be used in the form of motion sensors to open doors, flush toilets and automatic door buttons for easier access through doors. Voice recognition technology can also used for activating many of the above-mentioned barriers. Since, there is an inadequacy of resources available to meet the basic needs in education, it is estimated that for achieving the inclusive education goal will require additional financial support from the government.

3 Inappropriate Curriculum as a barriers

In any education system, the curriculum is one of the major obstacles or tools to facilitate the development of more inclusive system. Curriculum includes the broad aims of education and has its implications on transactional and evaluation strategies. In our country of diversity, curriculum is designed centrally, hence which leaves little flexibility for local adaptations or for teachers to experiment and try out new approaches. This results in making the content inaccessible and demotivating. Therefore, the design and development of specific learning and teaching materials and teaching arrangements should take cognizance the needs, interest, aspirations and uniqueness of the learners.

As a result of the knowledge based curriculum, the examinations are also too much content oriented rather than success oriented which is the demand of flexible inclusive curriculum. as cited by UNESCO (2003) [29] argued that, "while knowledge-based examinations are recognized to have their limitations in terms of both validity and reliability, formal standardized tests may also have adverse effects, such decontextualized facts and skills; ranking and sorting schools and children; narrowing the curriculum as teachers concentrate their teaching on the information, forms and formats required in the tests; and reinforcing bias in terms of gender, race/ethnicity and social class."

In the inclusive settings, assessment of learners must be against the broad aims of curriculum and education and also must be evaluated against their own achievements rather to be compared by others, which will be truly individualized. Also, it is suggested that the assessment has to be continuous, based on the feedback of both learners and the teachers. This will surely help learners also teacher's in selecting appropriate teaching methods and styles.

For inclusion to work, educational practices must be child-centered. This means that teachers must discover where each of their students are academically, socially, and culturally to determine how best to facilitate learning. Indeed, child-centered teachers view their role more as being facilitators of learning rather than simply transmitters of knowledge. Therefore, skills in curriculum-based assessment, team teaching, mastery learning, assessing learning styles (and modifying instruction to adapt to students' learning styles), other individualized and adaptive learning approaches, cooperative learning strategies, facilitating peer tutoring and "peer buddies," or social skills training are important for teachers to develop and use in inclusive classrooms. Clough (2000) emphasizes that these are not just good special education practices, but are good practices for all teachers.

For children with disabilities, education should support their inclusion into regular education through the application of methods, techniques and specific materials. For those individuals not able to be included in regular education classrooms, an educational program will be developed to respond to their individual learning needs. This will include the development of independent living and social skills supported by the use of programs and materials. This educational program includes orientation to parents and/or guardians as well as to teachers in basic education that receive students with special educational needs' As a consequence; all learners can be evaluated against their own achievements as opposed to being compared to other learners. Portfolio assessment can also be used. This would include learners' own products such as final 'best' work, various works in progress, samples of tests completed, certificates earned, goals met, daily work samples, self-evaluation of the progress of learning and teachers' observations (UNESCO, 2003) [29].

4 Untrained Teachers as barriers

For implementing the inclusive education successfully, it is important that teachers must have positive attitudes towards learners with special needs. But, because of lack of knowledge, education, understanding, or effort the teachers give inappropriate substitute work to the learners, which eventually leads to learners dissatisfaction and poor quality of learning. Even when these tangible barriers were not present, researchers say educators sometimes lacked an understanding of how to effectively adapt their environment and pedagogy to be inclusive. This can lead, for example, to 'velcroing', whereby education support workers (ESW) attach themselves to children with special needs, which works against inclusive measures and can isolate these children. Educators may also abdicate their responsibilities to ESWs, and fail to interact effectively with children with special needs.

Research about inclusiveness in many countries worldwide, early childhood services highlights the need for educators to go beyond an inclusive philosophy to inclusive action that ensures

all educators have appropriate knowledge and strategies to be inclusive of children with special needs and their wants.

Another important feature of the schools is high teacher–student ratios (average 1:45) and where it is expected that learners of diverse abilities have to be taught together. At the first place, there is a scarcity of trained teachers to deal with the diversity and secondly, it is very wrong to assume to deal with 45 learners with diversity. Hence, it is important to reduce the teacher- learner's ratio in the classroom, which is only possible if we have more schools with trained teachers to deal with the diversity of learners.

At present, training to teachers is fragmented, uncoordinated and inadequate taking place in a segregated manner i.e. one for special children and another for students with general capabilities; both of them are preparing teachers for the segregated schools. However, there is an effort by SCERT, DIETs in providing ongoing training program, which are not adequate because of various reasons. Therefore, it is important that an inclusive teacher education program must be designed which can foster proper skills among teachers.

5 Organization of the Education System

In our country, there are different types of schools such as private, government; public schools are developing inequality by offering differential levels of facilities and support. Those having an access to private schools have higher possibility of success as compared to those who go to government schools. Therefore, it is important like many developed countries, the common school system policy must be place properly. There is also a lack of information within many systems and often there is not an accurate picture of the number of learners excluded from the school system. Very often this leads to a situation where these learners do not have equal opportunities for further education or employment.

Another frequent criticism of the current special education system deals with the issue of "labeling effects" on students with disabilities. Inclusion standard-bearers suggest that the very act of labeling a student as "special" frequently lowers expectations and self-esteem**.** Further, special education placement in "pull out" programs "has [all too often] left many students with fragmented educations and feeling that they neither belong in the general education classroom nor the special education classroom". The impact of such stigmas, lowered expectations, and poor self-esteems on school learning is significant (Lipsky & Gartner, 1992).

This is a big challenge for all but; it is an opportunity to advance the school as a change factor that promotes dialogue and participation, making possible well-being through an education of quality for all without exception, for the commitment of the community. It is a fact, every educational system in the world needs to improve and work towards the best results. This is not an exception in India. It has lot of educational challenges, combined with socially and economically complicated contexts.

An important prerequisite for inclusive education is have respect for differences, respect for different learning styles, variations in methods, open and flexible curricula and welcoming each and every learner. A success of any learner is dependent on both school and community, but, both of then poses barriers in the implementation of the inclusive education policy. These barriers are both external and internal in nature and in order to facilitate inclusive education there has to have a

modification in the environmental conditions, which includes the physical changes in the school buildings and increased number of schools. Apart from that, very importantly there is a need to change the negative attitudes and more responsibility towards learners with special needs, which can be brought about by policy changes. There is a need to provide proper training to the teachers dealing with the diverse needs of the learners, applying appropriate individualized pedagogy and assessment system. Also, this training must be continuous.

6 Funding System

Quite a number of factors can be interpreted as barriers for inclusion. In some countries the funding system is not enhancing inclusive practices (Meijer, 1999). Not only the funding system may inhibit inclusion processes; but also the existence of a large segregated setting itself is a hindrance for inclusion. As shown before, in countries having a relatively large segregated school system, special schools and specialist teachers may feel threatened by the inclusion process. They fear that the survival of their position may be endangered. It is even more the case when the economic context is quite tense and finally their jobs may be in danger. In such situations it is very complex to debate inclusion on the basis of educational or normative arguments.

7 Problem for Classroom Teachers

A classroom teacher is expected to select educational methodology to best suit each student. This is a challenging goal for one teacher who potentially has more than 30 students in each of five to seven classes. Most students can be grouped with other students whose educational needs are similar. This may reduce the planning required to two or three groups. If you add special needs students who have severe learning delays, developmental issues, or who speak little or no English, this task can feel almost insurmountable – especially if the inclusive classroom does not include a co-teacher.

8 Problem for Special Education Teachers

The biggest problem for special education teachers who have students in inclusive classrooms is being available to every student. For example, if a particular subject teacher has 50 students who are distributed through 15 classes during any given period there is no way to assist every student every day. Students may have to be pulled out of class a few times a week for additional services, which also impacts the ability of the child and classroom teacher to maintain pace. If the concerned teacher rotates into different classes on different days, they are not able to get the full educational picture of the class and may not be there when the student needs them most.

9 Problems for Students

Special education and mainstream students both benefit from being in a classroom together. After all, work and life are not segregated by intelligence or ability. However, there are still some problems that need to be recognized. In a classroom of 30, with one or two special education students, it can be difficult for the classroom teacher to give the individual time and attention the students require and deserve. If the teacher is focusing on the special needs students, the students who need a more challenging environment may be overlooked because they are able to succeed with minimal assistance. While the students will likely succeed in the class, they may not feel

challenged and may become bored and disinterested in the class. If the teacher tries to make the class more challenging for the mainstream students, the special education students may feel singled out when their IEP exceptions become more noticeable in areas such as presentations, projects, and homework requirements. Being in every class together may actually alienate the students more than if they were separated for specific classes.

10 Parents of other Children

Research indicates that some parents of children who attend services where there are children with special needs enrolled held the view that "if children with disabilities were deemed to be too different, too difficult or too disabled to teach, or their participation in centres was seen as interfering with the learning of other children, and as taking up time, money or attention from the deserving 'normal' children, then their enrolment, attendance and participation in early childhood education should be questioned" Such attitudes can present a very significant deterrent to children with special needs and their families' sense of belonging and acceptance.

Challenges in Inclusive Education

Inclusion has been incorporated into almost every educational system, but we still need to learn and understand the real meaning of Education for All with quality and equity and recognize the fundamental role of teachers in the advancement of social justice, human rights, and opportunities for welfare. Each one of us needs to face the challenges in order to consolidate inclusion for the benefit of our community.

1. **Mainstream Schools:** Other important factors are the availability of sufficient conditions for support within mainstream schools. If knowledge, skills, attitudes and materials are not available in the mainstream settings, inclusion of pupils with special needs will be difficult to achieve. An adequate teacher training (in initial teacher training or through in-service) is an essential prerequisite for inclusion.

   Mainstreaming and other, older terms are sometimes associated primarily with the physical assimilation of students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers. This may be more a matter of "connotative baggage" rather than intent. Nevertheless, mainstreaming assumes that students with disabilities may share the same physical space (classroom, playground, etc.) with those who have no disabilities only when they are able to do the same activities as everyone else with minimal modifications. Further, the primary responsibility for these students' education remains with their special education teacher.

   According to Jansen (1995), mainstreaming has generally been used to refer to the selective placement of special education students in one or more "regular" education classes. [Mainstreaming generally assumes] that a student must "earn" his or her opportunity to be mainstreamed through the ability to "keep up with the work assigned by the teacher to the other students in the class.

   For some students with more severe disabilities, this has meant that their opportunities to be around non-disabled peers have been limited to (at most) lunch and recess; others may also have been integrated into physical education, music, art, and/or vocational programs.

Typically, however, only students with mild disabilities have been allowed to participate in the traditional core academic content areas (mathematics, language arts, science, history, etc.).

To summarize these terms as used in reference to special education, mainstreaming generally refers to the physical placement of students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers. The assumption is that their disabilities are able to be accommodated with relatively minimal modifications. Integration is primarily a legal term connoting the actual assimilation of different groups together (disabled and non-disabled), rather than just the facilitation of physical proximity. This may require more than minor modifications. Inclusion is the more popular educational term referring to the move to educate all children, to the greatest possible extent, together in a regular classroom setting. It differs from the term full inclusion in that it also allows for alternatives other than the regular classroom when more restrictive alternatives are deemed to be more appropriate.

2. In general, the tension between, on the one hand, the pressure for better outputs of schools and, on the other hand, the position of vulnerable pupils, is increasing. There is a growing attention in the society for the outputs of educational processes. One of the most explicit examples can be found in England where the publication of pupils' performance, by school, at the end of key stage assessment, including performance in public examinations at the end of statutory education (16+), has drawn much attention and discussion. The results are published by the media in the form of 'league tables', by rank order to 'raw' scores.

   Of course, it is not surprising that societies generally ask for more outcomes and benefits. As a result, market thinking is introduced in education and parents start to behave as clients. Schools are made 'accountable' for the results they achieve and there is an increasing tendency to judge schools on the basis of their outputs. It should be stressed that this development presents some dangers for vulnerable pupils and their parents. First, parents of children who are not identified as having special needs could tend to choose a school where the learning process is efficient and effective, and not hindered by slow learners or other pupils who need additional attention. Generally, parents want the best school for their child.

3. Schools are most likely to favor pupils who contribute to higher outputs. Pupils with special needs not only contribute to more variance within the class but also to lower average achievements. These two factors are a direct threat for pupils with special needs. This is especially the case within the context of a free school choice and the absence of an obligation for schools to admit all pupils within the catchment area. In this sense, the wish to achieve higher outputs and to include pupils with special needs can become antithetical. This dilemma needs serious attention. A few countries have pointed out this dilemma and it can be expected that others will follow in the near future. It is a clear area of tension that has to be addressed in order to protect the position of vulnerable pupils.

4. Inclusion at the level of secondary education is also an area of concern. Development of possibilities for (in-

service) teacher training and positive attitudes are challenges for the near future.

5. A 'rough' estimate of the percentage of pupils with special needs in major developing countries reveals that about 2% of all pupils are educated in segregated settings. It is difficult to assess to what extent progress has been made considering the number of pupils in segregated or inclusive provisions in such countries. However, during the last few years, countries with a relatively large special needs education system in segregated settings showed an ongoing increase in the percentages of pupils educated in special schools. Though exact figures are lacking, it could be said that not much progress has been made towards inclusion at the European level during the last ten years. On the contrary, the most reliable estimation tends to reveal a slight increase in segregation. Some countries still have to put their policies into practice. However, there is a general basis for optimism, especially in those countries that experienced an important growth in the number of pupils in segregated provisions, and which are now implementing promising policies.

6. Teachers are the key to success in inclusion. As an educator, you are philosophically committed to student diversity. You appreciate that learning differences are natural and positive. You focus on identifying and capitalizing on individual students' interests and strengths. But making inclusive education work requires something more: It takes both systems-level support and classroom-level strategies. The inclusive teacher should be accompanied in his early professional development by a mentor, following the facilitation and cooperation models. Reflections on teacher education for inclusion are as follows:-

Inclusion requires a large vision and specific competencies for all teachers. Now the teachers need to know that diversity is present in the classroom, and that they should attend to learners with a range of diverse needs. In this frame, it is imperative to prepare teachers for inclusion in all curricular plans for pre-service teachers, also for teachers in services, with the following professional aptitudes:

- Researcher. Always searches for explanations about their educative reality, has intellectual skills to propose diverse hypothesis, solve problems, generate innovation, and face challenges in the education field.
- Strategic. Is a professional with strong self- regulation, skills for planning, guiding and assessing, not only their own intellectual resources about the learning of curricular issues but also in their performance as a teacher. Always has an attitude to learn and improve. Faces uncertainty with creativity.
- Resilient. Always moves towards the future, in spite of their difficult situations, by making healthy adjustments against adversity.

The knowledge, skills and attitudes for all inclusion teachers must emphasize that the purpose of all teacher interventions is the students' learning. They also need to have high expectations for all (inclusive vision), develop inclusive projects including diverse teaching strategies and support

systems (inclusive practices) and participate in a collective work (inclusive language).

The inclusive teacher is a professional educator committed to his/her community, who recognizes individual differences and considers them in his/her educational intervention actions. S/he participates in collective teaching because it is essential for collaboration and dialogue and is also creative in implementing education by facing the challenges of diversity in specific educational project interventions.

- The inclusive teacher by their multi-tiered formation has a holistic educational view with strong skills and experience in order to participate in diverse contexts.

In our teacher programs, we are promoting each one of the seven essential components; combining the federal program (by mandate) with our complementary program. The focus of all the actions is to develop an approach to inclusive education teacher. Some conclusions are:

- Work together with other institutions to build a collaborative network, connecting colleagues and diverse professionals, interchanging knowledge and making new friends.
- Promote educational research projects to develop innovation.
- Participate in diverse social and educative programs in each community.
- Support the collaborative work of all teachers because it is the best way to attend to the diversity of our schools. In this sense, the mentoring process has a transcendent role.
- Choose the best student profile for teacher education.
- Enrich the Teacher Preparation Programs, with transversal competencies along the curricular plan.
- Increase all professional skills in term of alternative and augmentative communication systems such as Braille, Sign Language and Communication Board through a supplementary program.
- Make educational proposals to the Federal Education Department in order to improve the Training Teachers in Mexico based on action research.
- Collaborate with academic centers to share knowledge.

Conclusion

Few issues in education generate more discussion, confusion, or apprehension than the topic of inclusion. It is an issue that has outspoken advocates on all sides, whether staunchly for, avowedly against, or somewhere in between. Certainly, for a school or district to change and accommodate a more inclusive approach to providing services to students with disabilities as well as a host of other "at-risk" students, and do it in a way that ensures the success of all, will require significant restructuring. Inclusion is more than reconfiguring special education services. It involves an "overhaul" of the entire educational system. Special education and regular education faculty/staff roles and relationships will change, as will the traditional rules under which "things" happen within the classroom, campus, and district. Therefore, understanding the issues and ramifications prior to undertaking such a restructuring effort will be useful.

In the case of implementing a more inclusive approach to providing special education and other specialized services in the regular classroom, several of these leader actions are important. School leaders must work diligently to develop and impart a clear vision of what an inclusive classroom looks like

and how it functions. They must give significant attention to providing the kinds of ongoing staff development that expands the capacity of both regular and special education teachers to serve students with a variety of disabilities in a mainstream setting (e.g., cooperative learning strategies, team teaching skills, collaborating/team-building skills, individualizing instruction, mastery learning, identifying and adapting to different learning styles). Resources must be provided, including time for collaborative planning, support personnel that might be necessary, materials, and assistive technologies. Finally, school leaders must be mindful of the changing concerns that their staff, parents, and others have as greater inclusion begins to be implemented. By attending to these issues, a more inclusive educational system is possible. (Mohanty, 2011) [11]

While there are also very important human, economic, social and political reasons for pursuing a policy and approach of inclusive education, it is also a means of bringing about personal development and building relationships among individuals, groups and nations.

It is vital that those working in rural areas find their own solutions to the problems they face and so become as self-sufficient as possible. In every barrier lies a potential solution. Barriers and solutions can be seen as the 'flip sides of the same coin'. And it is largely a question of attitude whether people decide to focus on what they are able to do, rather than on what they do not have. The greater the barrier, the more creative and imaginative the solution tends to be.

"Children who learn together, learn to live together"

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