

Methodology of Teachers on Special Education

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ABSTRACT

Education socializes children into society by teaching cultural values and norms. It equips them with the skills needed to become productive members of society.

Special education (known as special-needs education, aided education, good education, alternative provision, exceptional student education, special ed., SDC, or SPED) is the practice of educating students in a way that accommodates their individual differences, disabilities, and special needs. Teachers are the key service providers in teaching students with special needs in the inclusive classroom. Teacher attitudes regarding inclusive education vary widely. A review of the literature indicates that overall, teachers believe in the concept of special education. The studies suggest that teachers like what inclusion classrooms do for their students and they are generally interested in serving students in such a manner. However, studies also indicate that teachers do not believe they are receiving enough support and training in how to teach an inclusion classroom. It is this lack of support and training which prevents them from being the most effective teachers in the inclusion situation. Other factors which affect teachers' attitudes include training of the teacher, availability of support system and also the severity of the disabling condition. This paper is an attempt to review the different issues affecting the approaches of teachers' on special education

KEYWORDS: Provision, Special Education, Prevents

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY:

Education socializes children into society by teaching cultural values and norms. It equips them with the skills needed to become productive members of society. Special education (known as special-needs education, aided education, good education, alternative provision, exceptional student education, special ed., SDC, or SPED) is the practice of educating students in a way that accommodates their individual differences, disabilities, and special needs. Special education aims to provide accommodated education for disabled students such as learning disabilities, learning difficulties (such as dyslexia), communication disorders, emotional and behavioral disorders, physical disabilities (such as osteogenesis imperfecta, cerebral palsy, lissencephaly, Friedreich's ataxia, and muscular dystrophy), developmental disabilities (such as autism spectrum disorder, Pervasive developmental disorder, and intellectual disabilities) and other disabilities. Disabled students are likely to benefit from additional educational services such as different approaches to teaching, the use of technology, a specifically adapted teaching area, a resource room, or a separate classroom

Inclusive education involves embracing human diversity and welcoming a children and adults as equal members of an educational community. This involves valuing and supporting the full participation of all people together with in mainstream educational settings. Inclusive education requires recognizing and

upholding the rights of all children and adults and understanding human diversity as rich resources, and everybody is the part of all human environments and interactions. Inclusive education is an approach to education free from discriminatory beliefs, attitudes and practices including free from ableism. Inclusive education requires putting inclusive values into action to ensure all children and adults belong, participate and flourish.

The goal of inclusive education is to break down the barriers that separate general and special education and make the inclusive students feel like and actually become active members of general education classroom.

Education is a process of enabling all children to learn and participate effectively within the mainstream school systems. It does not segregate children who have different abilities or needs. This in other words is to indicate the shift of thinking from an unnatural segregated setting towards supporting inclusive schools. According to Neary and Halvorsen (1995) “the best environment for learning is those in which students are motivated, learning is active and information is presented in a manner that recognizes the diversity of each student”

METHODOLOGY OF TEACHER ON SPECIAL EDUCATION:

Multisensory learning is using multiple senses, such as sight, sound, touch and movement, to help students learn and remember information. This approach is particularly effective for students with learning disabilities or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) who may struggle with traditional teaching methods.

A special education teacher may use visual aids like pictures or diagrams to help students understand concepts. They may also incorporate movement into learning like using dance or yoga to teach social skills or mindfulness. One of the most significant stipulations that allow for successful inclusive of special education students is the attitude or attitudes of the general education teacher regarding the inclusion of special education students into their classrooms. Classrooms are now becoming more diverse with respect to students abilities therefore sensitivity and awareness on the part of general education teacher is essential to promote successful inclusion. Many factors influence the general education teacher’s inclusion. When general education teachers are provided proper training and supportive services through a collaborative consultant and designated time to meet willingness to participate incollaborative interactions, they can come at par with special teachers.

Numerous studies have done to find out the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education result vary. A study done by Singh (2001) and Alur (2001) it was found that the majority of regular education teachers had a negative attitude towards inclusion. A comparative study by Mastropieri (2004) showed that special education teacher tend to have a negative attitude towards inclusion like their mainstream counterparts do. On the contrary some research findings have indicated that regular education teachers are becoming more positive towards inclusion (singh 2001). In some cases it has been reported that some regular educators display enthusiastic professionalism dedicated to the development and implementation of inclusion schoolpractice (Padeliadu and Lampropoulou 1997).

Studies in India like Singh (2001), Jha (2002), Mastropieri and Scruggs (2004) indicate that the majority of teachers who were participating in inclusion programs had strong negative feelings about inclusion. The teacher identified several factors that would affect the success of inclusion such as class size, inadequate resources, lack of adopted curriculum and lack of adequate training. There is some evidence that an important predictor of successful integration of students with disabilities in regular

classroom is the positive attitude of teachers. Research evidence also suggests that positive teacher attitudes towards inclusion often begins during pre-service teacher's preparation Subban and Sharma (2007) pointed out that if teacher leave from the university with negative attitudes then those attitudes are difficult to change. Consequently, positive attitudes can and need to be fostered through both training and positive experiences with students with disabilities.

Dickens and Smith (1995) conducted a study on the attitudes of both regular and special educators towards inclusion after their in-service training. They concluded that staff development is the key to the success of inclusion. Johnsons (1996) in a study described and analyzed the perceptions held by regular education teacher towards the placement of students with learning disabilities in their classrooms. Key findings of their study were that class size should be reduced to support inclusion and that teachers are basically enthusiastic about participating in inclusion. Teachers were also concerned about their level of training regarding modification and received effective teaching strategies for students with disabilities. Ali, Mustapha and Jelas (2006) examined the attitude and perceived knowledge of mainstream and special education teacher of primary and secondary schools towards inclusion education in Malaysia.

The main finding shows that in general teachers have positive attitudes towards inclusive education. They agreed that inclusive education enhances social interaction and inclusion among the students and thus it minimizes negative stereotypes on special needs students. The findings also show that collaboration between the mainstream and the special education teacher is important and there should be clear guidelines on the implementation of inclusive education. The findings of the study have significant implication to the school administrators, teachers and other stakeholders who directly and indirectly involved in implementing inclusion education.

INFLUENCING ISSUES ON THE TEACHERS' APPROACH:

There are innumerable factors affecting teaching, such as maturity, age, motivation, intelligence, mental health, physical needs, diet, attention and interest, level of aspiration, etc. Some factors have positive and some harm teaching, which we will study in this article. Teaching is a process in which the teacher, learner, and other variables are involved purposefully in an organized way, especially to exchange knowledge and betterment of existing skill sets.

A teacher is the most vital factor or component of the teaching process. Hence, we need to understand the factors that directly or indirectly affect the teachers to control them and improve the educational experience.

- **Knowledge of the subject matter:** As the teacher is the one who explains and delivers the subject matter, the teacher needs to have an in-depth knowledge of the content. Whenever any pupil asks any question, the teacher should be able to answer that question by providing a relevant answer. Teachers keep referring to books and other digitally available content to explain the content in a better way. Even though they have a referral source, the correct interpretation of the content available must be done by the teacher.
- **Knowledge of the learners:** The prior knowledge level of the learners is also quite vital in this teaching-learning process, as the teacher is supposed to deal with the pupils accordingly. The teacher is supposed to establish a link among the learners' existing knowledge and the novel knowledge they gain through the teaching-learning process.
- **Teaching Skills:** Now, there are multiple skills that the teacher is expected to possess, such as explanatory skills, presentation skills, communication skills, behavioural skills, etc., all of which

have a huge impact on the way the content is delivered to the learners and also affects the quality of content. Good teaching skills help the learners to remain focused on what is being taught and help them understand better.

- **Educational Qualifications:** Every teacher teaching a particular subject needs to have a minimum level of qualification for delivering the session as per the set norms and standards followed by the education board. This ensures that the quality of the subject matter is not compromised and that a knowledgeable person is teaching the respective pupils.
- **Experience:** It is quite obvious that the more experienced a teacher is, the better will be the deliverables. Experience also brings in more awareness and in-depth knowledge of the subject matter and builds a positive perception of the teacher amongst the pupils. The teacher also knows the areas in which the pupils might face difficulty.
- **Personality and attitude:** It might seem irrelevant, but the teacher's approach towards teaching in totality is quite critical. How a teacher handles the learner's queries, and the level of seriousness and empathy in delivering the subject matter is quite vital for any teacher to excel in whatever they are teaching. The teacher must be very careful while correcting the pupils so that their sentiments are not hurt and to avoid such a situation. The teacher should check her tonality and choice of words.
- **Discipline:** A teacher's level of discipline is reflected in the pupils. Education is a very serious affair, which involves a lot of commitment and dedication from the teacher's side. To be successful in this field, a teacher needs to be very disciplined in their approach and keep themselves updated with the changing requirements.
- **Mental health:** The mental stability of the teachers is also a very vital factor as they are dealing more or less with the same subject matter and the same level of pupils over so many years, and this might get overwhelming sometimes. This is also a very demanding profession where continuous upgradation needs to be done to keep pace with the ever-evolving climate, and so this takes a toll on the mental health of the teacher, which needs to be controlled and regulated. This can also be held and controlled to some extent by the educational institutes and by regular checks and engaging activities of the teachers involved.

Educational Research has suggested that teacher's attitudes might be influenced by a number of factors, which are in many ways, interrelated. For example, attitudes studies reviewed earlier appeared to vary according to disabling conditions. In other words the natures of the disabilities and educational problems presented have been noted to influence teacher's attitudes.

The degree of acceptance for inclusion was high for children considered to have mild or moderate disabilities. A great deal of research regarding teacher characteristic has sought to determine relationship those characteristics and attitudes towards children with special needs. Research have explored a number of specific teacher variables, such as gender, age, years of teaching experience, grade level and contact with disabled persons and personality factors, which might influence teacher's

Teaching experience is another factor mentioned in several studies as having an influence on teacher's attitudes. In this case, much of the research conducted seems consistent. Another factor that has attracted considerable attention is the knowledge about children with disabilities gained through pre and in service training. This was considered as an important factor improving teacher's attitude toward the implementation of an inclusion policy. Without a coherent plan for teacher training in the educational needs of the children with special needs, attempts to include these children in the mainstream would be difficult. (Eavamindis and brahmnowich 2002). In support of the above, a research conducted by Singh (2001) in some schools in India

reveals a significant difference between regular teacher who had training in Inclusive Education and those who did not. Generally researches conducted in some schools of India show a high correlation of teachers' attitudes with factors like availability of support adapted curriculum, training materials and classroom size. In support of the above karna(1999) experimented 100 students in one class, which makes the teaching learning process more difficult even for the non- disabled children. As a result she concluded that teacher will not be in a position to attend the individual problem and be interested in them. Further, it is explained that the lack of accessible and flexible curriculum and lack of training are the ultimate challenge affecting teachers' attitude negatively.

TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INSERTION:

Teacher education or teacher training refers to programs, policies, procedures, and provision designed to equip (prospective) teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, approaches, methodologies and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school, and wider community

Preparing teacher for regular class teaching has undergone a major pedagogical shift in recent years. Training institution are now required or ensure that pre service teacher are competent to cater for the needs of an increasing range of diverse learners. This move has been furthered by International recommendations from UNESCO to include content on inclusion as part of teacher training program (UNESCO 1994). In preparing teachers for inclusive classroom their attitudes, beliefs, expectations and acceptance of people with diverse needs may well be challenged. Teacher education is directly related to teachers' attitudes. Teachers who receive education about inclusion have been found to be more likely to have positive attitudes towards the inclusion of children who experience disability. Given the importance of attitudes for inclusion education educating all teachers as inclusion teachers is an important goal.

Teacher Education has been found to lead to more inclusive attitudes. However, some studies show only minimal changes and the majority of pre-service teachers feel unprepared for inclusive education. The traditional approach to teacher education in which teachers are taught about disability categories often in a week by week fashion serves to reinforce the myth of the 'normal' and 'sub-normal' child thus perpetuating ableism and impeding the opportunity to develop inclusive attitudes. However, in more recent years research has exposed effective approaches to improving attitudes towards and confidence in inclusion education through teacher education.

- Support to move beyond deficit thinking entrenched within the special education paradigm towards an approach to education that welcomes and celebrates diversity.
- Confidence for inclusive education through reflective practice on developing knowledge of flexible pedagogy and universal design for learning.
- Understanding of diversity as a resource, rather than a 'problem' and learning to presume competence and hold positive expectation of all children.
- Understanding of importance of listening to people who experience disability including children and drawing on the disability rights movement in striving towards inclusive education. Within this providing opportunities for respectful engagement with people who experience disability.

It is unrealistic and unfair to expect that the regular class teacher will be able to include children with disability in regular classroom without first receiving adequate training. It is through training that teachers could bring the necessary adaptation required to meet special needs of their students. A number of researches have concluded that successful implementation of inclusion depends largely on the good will of educators in addition to the skill they are required to have. Teachers with positive attitudes towards inclusion more readily

change and adapt to the ways they work in order to benefit students with a range of learning needs (jha 2002). It was also found that when teachers are not trained in techniques for including children with disability and do not share responsibilities with other they would not have change of attitudes. In other words when planning and training have not taken place, teachers develop negative attitudes towards inclusion which in turn affects their roles. To conclude regular teacher must be provided with the training and resource they need to met children's specific learning and behavioral needs of the successful implementation of inclusion.

OBSTACLES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION:

Parental disregard may make special needs learners less motivated and parents who are controlling often reduce their child's self-assurance and make it harder for them to learn. Dealing with lots of paperwork and meetings has been another major issue faced by skilled special education teachers.

Negative attitudes and biases towards individuals with disabilities or diverse learning needs can hinder inclusive education. Stereotypes, misconceptions, and lack of awareness about inclusive practices may result in resistance and reluctance to include all students in mainstream classrooms.

Evaluation of studies indicates that teachers do not always have the support they need to make inclusive education successful. For inclusive education to be meaningful, schools must recognize and responds to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula organizational arrangements teaching strategies, resources use and partnership with their communities.

STRUCTURAL OBSTACLES:

- Providing specialist support within mainstream settings when needed to ensure equitable access to education (e.g teaching Braille, assistance with setting up AAC systems).
- Ensuring that the education of specialist support providers (e.g. teacher of deaf; Braille teachers, allied health therapists) adequately facilitates the development of specialist skills. (Fluent signing, knowledge of how to teach Braille etc) as well as education to support recognition of and resistance to ableism and the ability to collaborate with teachers to support inclusive education.
- Applying Principle of universal design for learning.

CONSEQUENCES OF SPECIAL EDUCATION:

A quality and well-designed learning disability education positively impacts the child's psychological development. Regardless of impairments, with the right approach, the child will not be excluded and alienated, but will have a fulfilling social life. "It is because of the offensiveness of exiting injustices and barriers that we must not on the one hand underestimate the degree of the struggle involved if our vision of an inclusive society, it is to be realized or on the other hand fail to recognize the importance of establishing effective working relationships with all those involved in removing oppression and discrimination".

- Undertake a comprehensive review of policy and practice at all levels of the education system to ensure the rights of the students with disability.
- Inclusive education practice should become an integral part of education and training for allied health, education leaders and other education support professionals.
- Entails the need for the availability of training, adapted curriculum, resources and utmost responsibility of the teachers for the implementation of inclusive education.
- Direct accountable and regular consultation with students with disability and their families must be built

into the next phase of the development of the funding model for students with disability, including the collection of nationally consistent data on students with disability.

- To control factors contributing to negative attitudes in implementing successful inclusion.

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY:

A special education teacher helps children with special needs learn the same information and skills as other children in a school learn. Although the work can be challenging at times, it can also be satisfying to help children reach their full potential and see them.

Teachers and other professionals often lack understanding about roles and responsibilities in the care and education of children who experience disability. Careful consideration of and communication about the roles of different professionals is essential in order to avoid creating situation of exclusion. Regular collaboration with all members of the educational team including parents and specialist support professionals is required. Special education teachers are uniquely trained to support the learning needs of students with disabilities and to ensure their educational, behavioral, social, and emotional success.

This involves associated health professional and specialist teacher working with teachers and families, rather than with children directly. Where appropriate this support may be provided a support staff member is directly involved within classroom practice. Consulting children regarding the support they need and how this is best implemented is also essential within this process. It seems reasonable to conclude here that with the provision of more resources and support, flexible and accessible curriculum, pre-service and in-service training, teachers attitudes could become more positive towards special education.

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