

Impact of Inclusive Teacher Training Programs on Pre-service Teacher Educators: A Comprehensive Exploration

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ABSTRACT:

This research examines the impact of inclusive teacher training programs on pre-service educators, focusing on the concept of inclusive education and its legal and ethical considerations. Inclusive education is a fundamental human right that aims to create a more just society by addressing the diverse needs of all students, especially those vulnerable to marginalization. The study highlights the importance of integrating inclusive principles into teacher training programs, emphasizing practical experience and theory-based instruction. It calls for policy and institutional commitment to ensure inclusive education becomes a fundamental aspect of teacher preparation.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Teacher Preparation, Legal Consideration, Policy and Programmes, Key Concepts, Pre-Service Teachers.

INTRODUCTION:

Inclusive education means all children in the same classrooms, in the same schools. It means real learning opportunities for groups who have traditionally been excluded – not only children with disabilities, but speakers of minority languages too. Inclusive education has grown from the beliefs that education is a basic human right and that it provides the foundation for a more just society. It indicates “children who learn together, learn to live together”.

According to National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET, 1997, South Africa), “inclusive education is defined as a learning environment that promotes the full personal, academic and professional development of all learners irrespective of race, class, gender, disability, religion, culture, sexual preference, learning styles and language.”

In the period of education for all, it is very important to involve those also who are somewhat lacking behind. In this, children having some disability hold a main category. The special need children are frequently excluded from schools due to negativism and non-inclusive systems. Thus, creating an education opportunity for special needs children is very crucial in order to foster their development and provide environment for growing up to their full potential which helps in achieving the ‘universalization of education’ goal.

Globally ‘Inclusive Education’ is recognized as a philosophy of accomplishing justice, equity and quality education for all children, including children who are traditionally left out from mainstreaming of education due to their gender, disability or any attributes. Thus, Inclusive education can be defined in numerous ways that indicate the learning needs of the disabled children.

UNESCO defines Inclusive Education as a way of and countering the various needs of all learners with increasing their participation in learning and decreasing exclusion from education. The principle of 'Inclusive Education' was accepted at the "World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality" at Salamanca, Spain in 1994 (UNESCO) based on the principle that appropriate learning environment should be provided to all children regardless of perceived difference or disability. Inclusive education aims promotion of child-to-child along with parents and community participation in planning as well as execution of services generally for all children particularly including disabled children also. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' is a global treaty of human rights proposed to protect the rights and self-esteem of disabled persons that give clear reference towards ensuring the inclusive systems in education. (Joshi, 2020)

OBJECTIVES:

1. To familiarize of pre-service teacher educators with the key concept of inclusive education.
2. To find out legal and ethical consideration of inclusive teacher training programmes for pre-service teacher educators.

RESEARCH QUESTION:

1. What is the primary key concept of inclusive education that pre-service teacher educators are being familiarized with?
2. What are the legal and ethical considerations of inclusive teacher training programmes for pre-service teacher educators.

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY:

This research study aims to seek out major key concept of inclusive education that pre-service teacher educators are familiarised. Which through teacher educators are aware about several programmes and concept of inclusive education. Because it is essential when they are going to treat them. As well as conscious about more the vulnerability pupils for betterments and healthy being. The government also give major focus about inclusive education from 1948 onwards. And what are crucial legal authorization has been taken by the government also emphasized.

1. **Objective 1:** To familiarize of pre-service teacher educators with the key concept of inclusive education.
2. **Research Questions 1:** What is the primary key concept of inclusive education that pre-service teacher educators are being familiarized with?

sTo fulfil the primary objectives of this study that key concept of inclusive teacher training programmes for pre-service teacher educators are following.

Inclusive education (IE) is a new approach towards educating the children with and without disability under the same roof. It requires to take care of learning needs of all children with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. It helps all learners to learn together through access to common educational set-up (pre-school, schools and community education) with proper support services. The flexible education system which takes care of various types of learners and their needs can fulfil these requirements. In inclusion, value is the main point to be taken care of rather than the

experiment. All the children (disabled or non-disabled) are the future citizens of the country, so they have equal right to education.

Pre-service training refers to training individuals before they become teachers. This includes training at teacher training colleges and universities at both the national and provincial levels. Ideally, inclusive education should be a compulsory subject for all teacher candidates and an integral part of teacher training curricula. Fundamental knowledge and skills of inclusive education, such as understanding needs and abilities of children with special needs and pedagogic skills such as instructional accommodation and activity differentiation, should be provided widely to teacher candidates. (Troll et al., 2019)

The pre-service teachers were introduced to some background information of inclusion, in particular the CRPD, diversity in classrooms, and internal differentiation for subject-specific instruction. Second, specific methods and didactical approaches for inclusive teaching (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011) in science were discussed in comparison to internal differentiation.

Some key principles have aware about inclusive education by the teacher educators are:

- Teachers always have an important and decisive role in making the processes of inclusive culture in teaching learning environment. For success of inclusive education, it is extremely vital to maintain positive attitude of teachers and other stakeholders for inclusion.
- Inclusive education will not be successful if there is a lack of the enthusiastic support of stakeholders.
- Preparing teachers for inclusive classroom is a challenge in front of teacher education institutions.
- Teacher education curriculum plays vital role in preparing teachers for embracing inclusive education for providing learning environment besides curriculum that could meet needs of all learners.
- It requires knowledge, skills and commitment of teachers which are important factors to achieve inclusion goals in education.
- The 'teacher training programmes' is very effective in making teachers skilled for teaching all learners including learners with disabilities in same classroom.
- Teachers have important role in shaping potential behaviour of learners which enables them to face the challenges of life constructively.
- Individual child development and academic performance stated that access to education is an access to success.
- Flexible and accommodating curriculum becomes a big source of motivation for children especially the disabled and handicapped.
- Education is a fundamental right of all individual.
- Teacher-training and teacher's role as interactive, continuous and supporting personnel.
- involvement of parents and community would enable to bring about attitudinal changes.
- To fulfil the constitutional responsibility.
- Breaking the barrier of poverty.
- To improve the quality of education.
- For achieving social equality.
- For development of healthy citizenship.
- Sense of self-confidence and social prestige.
- Profiting from "cascade model"
- Use of latest technology.

- Awareness about major recommendation whatever given by diversified policy and programmes towards inclusive education.

These are key concept of inclusive education where pre-service teacher educators are must be ensure during the training process for giving better treatment in future. And also, they have need being attitudinal changes among themselves.

1. **Objective 2:** To find out legal and ethical consideration of inclusive teacher training programmes for pre-service teacher educators.
2. **Research Question 2:** What are the legal and ethical considerations of inclusive teacher training programmes for pre-service teacher educators.

Teachers play a central role in welcoming and teaching all students, regardless of their background, ability and identity. They need specific skills to adapt teaching to learners' diverse needs – a skill that is acutely needed during school shutdowns – but they need support and training to know how. This World Teachers' Day, a new policy paper by the GEM Report and the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (TTF), "*Inclusive teaching: Preparing all teachers to teach all students*" looks at teacher training programmes, touching upon issues of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and the support mechanisms in place to help teachers foster inclusion.

The ideal of teacher training of inclusion is rarely realized. Teachers are often taught inclusion on the side, rather than as a central principle of all the training they receive. Laws and regulations pertaining to education must have a clear vision for inclusive teacher preparation.

To guarantee that the ideas of inclusive education are completely mainstreamed, pre-service and in-service training programmes should be examined and updated. Instead of being an elective that helps certain teachers become ready to teach specific target groups, inclusion for all should be a fundamental component of universal pre-service training that imparts inclusive principles.

Systems for educating teachers must provide a more effective mix of practical experience and theory-based instruction. Prioritising peer training and professional exchanges is necessary. Examples of these include learning communities, resource centres, linkages between normal and special schools, mentorship, and team teaching.

The teachers teaching in regular schools are seeing more and more CWSN in their classroom as a result of pro-inclusion initiatives by Government of India such as Right to Education Act 2009 which has made education up to elementary level not only completely free and compulsory but also made it a legal right of all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years (Right to Education)³ and up to 18 years for children with disabilities (Children Learn Better with Inclusive Education, DNA)⁴ ; adoption of zero rejection policy and attempt to provide education to CWD in multi-option mode i.e. regular schools, Home Based Education, support services under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan (SSA), the flagship program of Government to achieve Education for All (EFA)⁵ ; and the Rights for Person with Disability (RPWD) Act 2016 which has identified 21 conditions of disabilities deserving of educational provisions.

Since 1981, systematic attempts have been made in the field of teacher training for handling needs of special children. The work has been taken up by NCERT designing courses of short-term duration, mainly to implement the integrated education (IEDC) scheme floated by the govt. of India under centrally sponsored schemes which has now been named as projected- Integrated education of the disabled (PIED). NCERT has designed three level courses which are:

Level I: one week training of all primary teachers in the project area.

Level II: in-service training for six weeks for selected teachers.

Level III: one-year multi-category training of teachers since 1987 in its regional colleges of education.

A six months training courses has been given to key persons at the NCERT, NEW DELHI. Several courses have been started in some rehabilitation council of India. Degree courses have been started in some universities leading to B.Ed. and M.Ed. in special education.

The Central Advisory Board of Education published Sargent Report in 1944. In this report, for the first-time provision for the handicapped (the word used in this report) were to form an essential part of the national system of the education administered by department of education (Julka, 2006). According to this report handicapped children were to be sent to special schools when the nature and extent of their defects made it necessary, institutions were to be established to prepare the handicapped for employment and special teacher training programme be started.

In 1964, the Kothari Commission (1964-66) brought up the issue of children with special needs in the Plan of Action (Jangira,1995) and recommended for including children with special needs into ordinary schools. It recommended experimentation with integrated programmes in order to bring in as many children in these programmes. The National Policy on Education (1986) included a full chapter on "Education of the Handicapped" and formulated guidelines for action. The NPE (1986) strongly emphasized the need for the expansion of integrated education.

In spite of hundred percent of financial provisions being provided under the scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) integrating children with special needs in the general education system were not adequate and only 2-3 percent of the total population of these learners were actually integrated into regular schools. In India, the linguistic shift from the term, integration to inclusion was formally introduced in the National Curriculum Framework for School Education – NCFSE (2000) brought out by the NCERT. It recommended inclusive schools for all and to provide quality education to all learners (Julka, 2006). (Panigrahi. A., 2018).

The recommended special education programs and services in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) are designed to help the student achieve annual goals and participate in the general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment. The IEP Committee considers the student's evaluation results, strengths, parental concerns, state or district-wide assessments, and unique considerations. Recommendations must be individually determined based on the student's abilities and needs, not solely on disability category, program availability, space, convenience, or district configuration. For school-age students, program options include consultant teacher services, integrated co-teaching, resource room, special class, and travel training. Preschool options include special education itinerant teacher services and special classes. Related services encompass speech/language therapy, audiology, interpreting, psychology, counselling, physical and occupational therapy, orientation and mobility, parent counselling and training, school health, social work, and assistive technology. Program modifications, accommodations, and supplementary aids and services aim to facilitate inclusion, with examples like note-takers, alternative instructional materials, extra time, special seating, behaviour plans, and additional personnel. The IEP specifies service initiation dates, frequency, location, and duration (Special Education, 2010).

NCTE has launched the integrated teacher education programme (ITEP) under the NEP 2020 in which the duration of B.Ed. programme has been increased from two years to four years and discontinued giving approval of two years B.Ed. programme from the academic session 2023-24. This council has decided not decided to grant new approvals to any institutions for running two-year B.Ed. (special Education)

programmes from the academic session 2024-25. The council is in process of developing a new training programme on the pattern of NCTE soon, as per NEP 2020.

CONCLUSION:

This research study focuses on the imperative aspects of inclusive education that pre-service teacher educators need to be acquainted with. The primary objective is to familiarize these educators with key concepts related to inclusive education, recognizing its importance in addressing the diverse needs of students, particularly those vulnerable to marginalization. Inclusive education aims to create an environment where children with and without disabilities can learn together, emphasizing the value of inclusion over experimentation. The study delves into the legal and ethical considerations of inclusive teacher training programs for pre-service teacher educators. It emphasizes the need for a clear vision for inclusive teacher preparation within laws and regulations. The research suggests that inclusion should be an integral component of universal pre-service training rather than an elective option. The importance of a well-rounded mix of practical experience and theory-based instruction, as well as prioritizing peer training and professional exchanges, is highlighted.

The research underscores the significance of inclusive education in shaping a positive, inclusive culture and emphasizes the need for continuous efforts to integrate inclusive principles into teacher training programs. The legal and ethical considerations discussed further highlight the commitment required at both policy and institutional levels to ensure that inclusive education becomes a fundamental aspect of teacher preparation. Overall, the findings provide valuable insights for enhancing pre-service teacher educators' understanding and implementation of inclusive education, contributing to the broader goal of creating an inclusive and equitable educational system.

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