

The Rights of Children with Disabilities to Education

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Abstract – The democratic and human-rights based on intent of Inclusive Education is defined in the Salamanca Statement, and represented in the “recognition of the need to work towards ‘schools for all’ – institutions which include everybody, celebrate differences, support learning, and respond to individual needs’.

Education for All (EFA), which represents an international commitment to ensure that every child and adult receives basic education of good quality, is based both on a human rights perspective, and on the generally held belief that education is central to individual well-being and national development.

INTRODUCTION

The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) (2000), brought out by the NCERT, suggested inclusive schools for all without specific reference to pupils with SEN as a way of given that quality education to all learners. The inclusion of children with special needs /impairments (CWSN) in commonplace schools and classrooms is presently a part of provided that equity issues in the overall internalization of primary education (SSA).The constitutional amendment in education is the fundamental right which includes all children including children with special needs. This concept of inclusive education is included into the policy documents of numerous international organizations.

Objectives of policy on education for CWSN: -

1. The government has to give the highest priority to enhance their education system to allow them to include all children regardless of individual differences or difficulties.
2. The government has to accept as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in usual schools unless there are convincing reasons for doing otherwise.
3. The training program for the teachers has to include the education of disabled children and recognition of disabled offspring.
4. All children have access to general education system, to expand the coverage to reach the unreached population.

5. Inclusive education (IE) in Indian context is for children with disabilities, at the national level, the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and the Program of Action (1992) gives the essential guiding principle framework for education, emphasizing the need to correct existing inequalities. It stresses on reducing dropout rates, improving learning achievements and increasing access to students who have not had an easy chance to be a part of the mainstream system. The NPE, 1986 envisaged measures for integrating the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence (MHRD, 2005).

What is Inclusive Education?

It is the execution of the 'policy and process' that allows all children to contribute in all programmes. 'Policy' means that disabled children should be conventional without any limitations in all the educational programmes meant for other children. It denotes equal opportunity, and accepts every child with his own unique capabilities. This principle must be accepted by all the international, national and limited programmes. The 'process' of inclusion denotes the ways in which the scheme makes itself welcoming to all. In provisions of inclusion of disabled children, it means the shift in services from 'care of the disabled child' to his 'learning and personal development'. Inclusive education goes one step auxiliary by defining these children as 'children with special needs' who require special attention, rather than children who are 'impaired' or 'handicapped'. Inclusive education is nothing but 'Making the programme for disabled children as an essential part of the universal educational system rather than a system within general

education'.

According to NCFSE- Segregation or isolation is good neither for learners with disabilities nor for general learners without disabilities. Societal requirement is that learners with special needs should be educated along with other learners in inclusive schools, which are cost effective and have sound pedagogical practices (NCERT, 2000). Inclusive Education prepared by the MHRD (2003) uses the following definition:

Inclusive education means all learners, young people—with or without disabilities being able to learn together in ordinary preschool provisions, schools, and community educational settings with appropriate network of support services (Draft of Inclusive Education Scheme, MHRD, 2003).

Why Inclusive Education?

The impact of inclusive education for students is as follows-

- Expenditure the time in school day along with classmates who do not have disabilities provides many opportunities for social communication.
- Teachers often develop higher standards of performance.
- General and special educators in inclusive settings be expecting appropriate conduct from all students.
- Students are skilled age-appropriate, efficient components of academic content, which may never be part of the curriculum.
- Attending inclusive schools increases the probability that students will continue to participate in a variety of integrated settings throughout their lives (Ryndak and Alper, 1996).

Overview of inclusive education for children with disabilities

The challenges facing in creating environments, in which the education rights of children with disabilities are respected, are considerable. Despite significant efforts to address their exclusion from mainstream schooling, and many examples of positive practice, many countries are still struggling to address the issue of equitable and inclusive access for children with disabilities. Recent reviews of the education of children with disabilities by both OECD and UNICEF have found a wide gap between official recognition of inclusive education in the form of international treaties and legislative frameworks, and the actual situation on the ground.

The causes are multiple: lack of co-ordination and collaboration between ministries providing services to children with disabilities, the prevailing influence of the concept of defectology on the design of education provision for children with disabilities; limited availability of social service providers, lack of reliable and detailed data and indicators, inadequate financial and human resources, and hostile public attitudes. It is apparent that legal reforms, which, in theory, create the opportunity and means to claim rights, will not, on their own, be capable of challenging the deep-seated discriminatory practices which currently impede change. Measures are needed to build the capacity of the system as a whole in order to challenge inequity, and meet the obligations to promote and protect the rights of children with disabilities undertaken by all countries in the region.

Existing provisions for Inclusive Education-

Education Department-

➤ Inclusive learning(Primary Education)-

- Following activities are conducted in this section;
- Access Planning - Girls; SC/ST; Minorities among CWSN
- Excellence schooling as per standards
- Transition facilitation class to class Head Teachers/Teachers' ability building sensitization.
- CWSN friendly projects on school subjects.

➤ Inclusive learning (Secondary Education)-

The Central Ministry of Human Resource Development initiated new proposal called Integrated Education for Disabled Children in Secondary schools (IEDSS) with the major intention of providing equal education opportunities for children with disabilities in the regular school system.

➤ Women & Child Development-

Government has initiated towards CWSN related programmes such as intrusion, recognition, counseling support services to the parents and community etc.

➤ Department of Health and Family Welfare

Under school health programme (Suvarna Arogya Chaithanya) the state government is given that facilities such as, health assessment camps at school level and providing health cards, Corrective surgery, etc.

➤ Objectives of policies on inclusive education-

1. The governments have to give the highest policy and budgetary priority to improve their education systems to enable them to include all children regardless of individual differences or difficulties.
2. The governments have to adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise.
3. The training programmes for the teachers have to include the education of disabled children.
4. All children have access to general education system, to expand the coverage to reach the unreached population.

CONCLUSIONS

The paper represents that be short of of knowledge, educational access and skill, disabled brood were primarily treated as unwanted and segregated from other children. Later their learning was carried out in special schools. In recent times there has been a shift towards having children with disabilities attend the same schools as non-disabled children.

Children with disabilities remain with their correct to education far from being fully realized. Although significant efforts have been made to overcome the historic favoritism and keeping out they practice, too often such actions are disjointed and un-coordinated both crossways and within ministries. They fail to address the necessity for tackling the institutionalized barriers impeding change: the continued reliance on the narrow pedagogy of defectology, rooted in a medical understanding of disability; the continued focus on segregation and institutional care, with insufficient investment in community-based services and supports; the deep-seated prejudices among those professionals charged with the responsibility for promoting inclusive education; and the lack of sufficient engagement with and respect for the expertise and potential contribution of families of children with disabilities, as well as the children themselves. Lack of resources is often cited as a barrier to change.

The educationists now feel that each child should be allowed to learn in his own way. The concept of inclusive education has been spelt out in the Salamanca statement and the framework for action on special needs education 1994. It states that all governments have been urged to "adopt as a matter of law or policy, the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise". The basic premise is that the school should meet the educational needs of all children irrespective of their disabilities or limitations.

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