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PREFACE

Indian education system catering over 300 million students of various categories is expanding continuously to bring considerable transformation. It is expected to be more accessible, inclusive and aligned for catering needs of the fast changing global society. The emerging digital technology is immensely influencing school and higher education system leading to significant changes in coming days. Digital learning with interactive apps and online resources will be more used by students. The National Education Policy, 2020 will not only promote innovative teaching and learning processes but also emphasize inclusion of Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into curriculums at all levels of education, which purports to promote indigenous Indian systems of knowledge. Blended learning with integration of online learning and traditional class room teaching offering flexible and personalized experience will be in focus and used widely. There will be shift in curriculum directing towards environmental awareness, entrepreneurship, project based experiential learning etc. to prepare the students for upcoming job market. Schools and parents will more focus to promote creativity, critical thinking, empathy, physical, emotional and social skills.

The Higher Education will emphasize on multidisciplinary approach with multiple entry and exit points. It will be more flexible and accessible with promoting online and distance education programmes to cater needs of diverse group of students and working professionals. Industry- Academia collaborations between universities and industries will be encouraged to address needs of job market with emphasis on internship programs, hand on training/ workshops, guest lectures by industry professionals etc. Vocational education will emphasize on re-skilling, up-skilling & life long learning to meet needs of job markets.

Education is a dynamic process with the teacher being the central focus. It provides new shape to the individual and consequently the nation. It has potential to play a significant role to bring about social change, economic growth and political development in any society. Teacher and Teacher Education needs to be oriented to achieve sustainable development goals (SDG). Individual excellence and life long learning matter a lot for success in Teacher Education. The teachers have to be updated with disciplinary knowledge and emerging digital technology regularly as their students used to access it. So, the performance can very well surpass degrees. A teacher has to compete with global teaching community to remain relevant in the current technology dominated environment. There is need that students at all levels should be taught by well qualified, passionate, motivated, professionally trained and well equipped teachers to promote creativity. The present volume of the Journal *Educatum* tried to address various issues pertaining to Teacher Education to enhance the knowledge in the discipline of education.

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INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights established the fundamental human right to education for all, which serves as the cornerstone of inclusion. All students receive an inclusive education, which means they attend the same schools. The idea of inclusion in education extends beyond the boundaries of classrooms and school grounds. The intention is to alter one's perspective on life. Little actions in the classroom can emphasize how inclusive. Teachers have played a significant role to promote inclusive education. Although government of India has taken initiative for inclusive education, in spite of this in ordinary classroom situation it is a challenging task for teacher to reach to the word inclusion. In the atmosphere of inclusive classroom many realistic hindrance pull back both teachers and students. This article intendance to make an in - depth study on the challenges and issues confronted by teachers in inclusive classroom. To understand this, responses has collected through survey and interview method from some government school teachers in West Bengal. The findings of the study reflect the practical challenges of inclusive classroom's teacher. This study advocates teachers' remarks for successful inclusive classroom work.

Keywords: *Inclusive classroom, CWSN, challenges, NISHTHA.*

INTRODUCTION

The term Inclusion refers the acceptance of all regarding their individual personality and differences. It is a roadmap of mainstreaming where every learner gets equal opportunity and express themselves according to their capacity which suits them best. In a setup of inclusive education, all students are offered with in general curriculum, pedagogy, methodology and importance. Inclusive education can be succeed with the collaboration and team work of all stakeholders, teachers, parents, NGOs, peer learners and community. An inclusive classroom secures safety and opportunities of slow learners, disable and special Childs along with their all peers. Inclusive Education has evolved from special education to Integrated Education, and then to Inclusive Education. In 1966 Kothari Commission recommended the education of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) in regular school. After that in 1974, Government of India has launched integrated education. In 1992, RCI (Rehabilitation Council of India) has introduced special B. Ed. Person with Disability Act - 1995 has categorized 7 type of disability. For international work on Inclusive Education, UNCPRD (United Nations Convention on the Rights

of Person with Disability) has formed. In 2016 as the revive form of PWD Act, RPWD act (The Rights of Person with Disability) has come out. Where 21 disabilities has determined. Recently, NEP 2020 emphasis on supporting CWSN with Regular Schooling, Modules, Assistive Devices and Orientation to Parents. For ensuring equal Inclusion in Education, NEP - 2020 has take Intervention for Socio Economically Disadvantage Groups, Special Mechanism for tribal groups. NEP - 2020 also have prepared Gender Inclusion Fund.

Classrooms that are inclusive are fantastic because they allow us to leverage each student's unique experience, cultural background, and personality to enhance non-formal learning. It can be challenging to establish a more inclusive classroom if you lack the necessary tools or are ill-prepared. Obstacles that can prevent pupils from progressing can be removed by teachers.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

In India classroom environment meets multidiversity. Within this set up unity is most important thing to achieve educational goal. In classroom situation teacher is responsible to create this unity. An inclusive environment in classroom may create conflict to teachers. It is a challenging task for teacher to accept the situation with full of motivation and respect. But sometimes teachers faces unpredictable situation in inclusive classroom. I have try to analysis various issues and challenges of teachers while teaching in inclusive classroom from their responses. I think from this point of view the study is significant.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- to know the perspective of school teachers towards CWSN.
- to advocates the issues and challenges of school teachers' in an inclusive classroom.
- to analysis the NEP 2020 initiatives for teacher preparation for an inclusive classroom situation.
- to know the capacity building programmes for enriching professional competencies of teachers.

TEACHERS' ROLE IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

In an inclusive classroom teacher plays most significant role to identify each and every students according to their academic, social, behavioural strengths. Teachers make IEP (Individualized Education Plan) on the basis of students' ability.

Teachers present an assistive teaching with assistive technology in inclusive classroom. For example, a visually impaired student requires large print course material or another hearing impaired student may need the preference seat to focus on teaching -learning. Here teachers provide various assistance.

Another crucial role of teachers in inclusive classroom is to create friendly cooperative learning situation. He/she do help to pair a buddy team among peer learners.

In inclusive classroom teachers makes learning design adding with videos, images, graphics, highlighting texts, symbols to create need-based lessons. (Saxena, 2023)

To ensure the inclusion as the heart of teacher training:

- Laws and regulations pertaining to education must express a precise vision for inclusive teacher preparation.
- To guarantee that inclusive education principles are completely mainstreamed, pre-service and in-service training programs should be examined and updated. Instead of being an elective that helps some teachers get ready to teach specific target groups, inclusion for all should be a fundamental component of general pre-service training that imparts inclusive values.
- Systems for training teachers must provide a more successful mix of practical experience and theory-based instruction. Prioritizing peer training and professional exchanges is necessary. Examples of these include learning communities, resource centers, linkages between mainstream and special schools, mentoring and team teaching.
- To support teachers in achieving their goal of inclusive teaching, district or theme education coordinators, head teachers, and teaching assistants must all possess the same level of preparation.
- Teacher education programs must incorporate a monitoring and evaluation culture.

Teachers and Counsellor Collaboration in inclusive classroom:

Counsellor helps teachers to take required strategies for dealing with Children With Special Needs. Besides, they raise awareness among teachers as well as parents. In an inclusive classroom teacher and counsellor work collaboratively to understand students' potentiality and their needs. Mainly counsellor plays a bridge role for effective communication between students and teachers.

Capacity building programmes enriching professional competencies:

STQ: Standard Teaching Quotient (STQ) is a capacity building programme in Teacher Training Courses to calculate professional skills of participating teachers on the teaching -learning of diverse learners.

NISHTHA: It is an integrated teacher training programme designed to increase primary teachers' ability to enhance learning results. It is a nationwide mission that falls under the Samagra Siksha program, which is centrally financed in 2019–20. The Department of School Education and Literacy introduced it. NISHTHA's primary goal is to raise the standard of education in schools by implementing integrated teacher preparation. Encouraging and motivating educators to support students' critical thinking is one of the other goals.

Highlighted perspective of NISHTHA:

- c) Increasing the number of teachers to 4.2 million.

- d) Principals and heads receive integrated training as essential academic support.
- e) Put an emphasis on competency-based teaching and learning as well as higher order thinking skills.
- f) First-level counsellor training for all heads of schools and teachers.
- g) Encouraging happy and hands-on learning.
- h) Knowledge of programs and activities sponsored centrally.
- i) A system of online support and monitoring.
- j) The merging of efforts across departments.
- k) Training modules with an activity focus.

NEP - 2020 INITIATIVE

NEP 2020 requires the creation of special education certificate programs for pre-service and in-service generalist or subject teachers in order to expand the workforce capacity to serve CWSN in schools. For both regular and SE (Special Educator) instructors, all in-service training is currently housed within the Samagra Shiksha program. Through Samagra Shiksha, all instructors will take part in a regular inclusive teacher education program that will help them become more skilled at identifying the educational needs of impaired kids in inclusive classrooms.

The in-service teacher training programs of district teacher training institutes and other institutions will be complemented by the block/cluster level instruction. In 2019, RCI has over 27,700 resource teachers and SE teachers registered nationwide. Special educators can work as visiting or itinerant teachers to provide help in schools, and they can be allocated at the cluster level.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY TEACHERS IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

From the very beginning initiative has taken on various aspect related to inclusive education. But the challenges of teachers is still remain.

To analysis this some questions were asked to the teachers:

Sl. No.	Description
1	Can teachers explain the concept of inclusion and inclusive education?
2	Have inclusive education related any handbook to them?
3	Have they face problem to teach inclusive classroom?
4	Have any teacher attend any training on inclusive education?
5	Are the teachers comfortable in Team - teaching method with counsellor or special educator in inclusive classroom?
6	Can teachers identify the diverse learners and advise their families to take care?
7	Is there are available proper infrastructure in classrooms arrangement?

Teachers' view about Description:

- Most of the teachers don't know about inclusive education.
- Inclusive education related handbook which are provide by NCERT, is unavailable to them.
- This is a mental stress to them in this type of classroom setup where some students can't accept the class for their disabilities. Within the short class time it is a difficult task to teach the CWSN students according to their needs. There is lack of flexible and proper curriculum and TLM to teach them.
- Most of them has not attend any Inclusive Education related training.
- Maximum number of teachers doesn't agree to share his / her class with special educator. According to them it is time consuming process.
- The teachers number are very few who can identify unhealthy students and advice families to takes care.
- There is no infrastructure for CWSN classroom arrangement.

Following are the few suggestions from the teachers to promote better inclusive environment in classroom and school premises also, ----

3. Area wise workshop arrangement for CWSN students.
4. Recruitment of special educator in a school according to student - teacher ratio.
5. For collaborative teaching with special educator, at first a practice session is necessary.
6. A psychologist / counsellor must be appointed in every school for both student and teacher.
7. Cooperation and involvement of teachers, School Management Committee (SMC) , non - teaching staff, peers, parents.
8. Appointment of special teachers who takes training about CWSN teaching -learning methodology.
9. CWSN related rights and law should be reflect on school wall.
10. School infrastructure development like ramp, toilet facilities.
11. Arrangement CWSN and inclusive education related seminar and workshop.

FINDINGS

By doing critical analysis, it is clear that in spite of taking government initiative to making schools Accessible to all --- till now there is lack of implementation. Huge number of school and teachers is not ready yet to accept this concept. It is very challenging to every teacher in an inclusive classroom teaching. Day by day the inclusive situation is increasing. But lacking the knowledge about the concept inclusive education is pulling back to both teacher and student. Till now some teachers has negative and non - cooperative attitude towards CWSN. Like other nations hit by the pandemic, India also saw significant effects on the education sector. The

government was under pressure to come up with new rules and tactics to lessen learning discontinuity as a result of the disruption to the comfortable and traditional face-to-face classroom setting. Lockdowns and social distancing measures were implemented in an effort to stop the corona virus from spreading, and this led to a revaluation of the processes used to supply educational services in order to give children with disabilities and those living in rural locations access to education. In some inclusive classroom is affected by bullying, which makes teacher disturb to teach. Lack of parents conscious teachers cannot step forward to understand unhealthy situation of students.

Recruitment of one special educator per school is not enough also; because, if she/he rotates into different classes on different days, they will not be able to give full attention to a particular student when the student needs them most. In some cases; in spite of having Assistive and Adaptive technology, teachers do not have any experience about the uses of these. Also for the lacking of appropriate teaching method and model inclusive classroom is suffers a lot. A particular method may not be suitable for every student. Arranging various methods are not possible as per the requirements of different diverse students.

CONCLUSION

Teachers' attitude, understanding and acceptance regarding inclusive education are at the crucial point for successful Implementation. Creation of a successful inclusive classroom without proper cooperation of teachers is not possible. Programme like STQ, NISHTHA should run in every block level. Attend on inclusive teaching related training should be done mandatory for every regular school teacher. Proper pedagogical methodology (eg: Universal Design for Learning, High Five Learning Strategy, Differentiated instruction, Seven Wonders of Learning, Collaboration teaching etc), school infrastructure and TLM should be arrange in every school. From these every learner should meet their educational opportunities according to their needs and also teachers could meet with a healthy and flexible teaching environment in inclusive classroom setting.

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