



ROLE OF TEACHER IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

In an inclusive education classroom normal school teacher has to teach differently. In contrast to traditional and customary, teacher centered teaching methods where the teacher has to deliver lectures to the entire class; in an inclusive classroom the focus shifts from teacher to learner i.e. here everything revolves around the student and its needs. Teachers now use such methods in which students use maximum of their powers and learn according to their own pace. The role of a normal class teacher now has changed a lot from a teacher he/she is now a diagnostician, a decision maker and an instructional manager so that he/she can deal effectively and efficiently with the challenges and tasks set and posed by students with special needs. This paper is about the changing role of a normal classroom teacher from when he /she is serving in a normal classroom with normal school children to a situation when he/she is serving in an inclusive classroom setting where there are students with and without special needs. The roles and accountabilities of normal school teachers have now been comprehensive, wide-ranging and all-embracing after the introduction of inclusive education programs. Now they have to cater the needs of special students and normal students at the same time. To perform this duty efficiently it is vital that normal school teachers must have appropriate awareness, techniques, positive attitude.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Role, Normal School Teacher, Special Students.

Introduction

Einstein said that no two individuals are alike and thus can't be taught and assessed in the same way. Like, a fish can't be evaluated by its ability to fly; similarly a bird can't be examined by its swimming ability. Similarly, the section of our children which are "differently abled" are not different section altogether. No two individuals have same ability, same needs, so these children are no different from them. But, in present scenario these children are taught in different schools, different environment and different syllabus. Why? In the formal system of education in India, these children are considered as completely different set of students. Why do we have the different schools? Thus, the concept of inclusive education was introduced where it was expected that all strata of students have the right to get education in same school and which must cater the needs of various students. There are some definitions which try to define the inclusive education and its concept.

According to UNESCO (2001) "Inclusive education is concerned with all learners with a focus on those who have traditionally been excluded from educational opportunities such as learner with special needs and disabilities, children from ethnic and linguistic minorities."



The Draft of Inclusive Education Scheme, MHRD, (2003) "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 service."

According to Save the Children (2008) "Inclusive education acknowledges that all children can learn, respects differences in children e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, language, disability etc., enables education structures, systems and methodologies to meet the needs of all children, is part of a wider strategy to promote an inclusive society, and is a dynamic process that is constantly evolving."

One can conclude from the above definitions that:

Every single student with or without special need belonging to any gender, caste, colour, creed, religion or ethnicity; should be educated in community schools. Special education teachers as well as normal education teachers work in a collaborative model in order to provide maximum services to these students.

It is a process in which students should be made the active members so that they can learn more.

Process of zero rejection

The decision making practice about the services, support and place should be flexible and individualized.

Every single student with or without special need belonging to any gender, caste, colour, creed, religion or ethnicity; is provided with an opportunity to make social network and friendship bonds. He should be taught in general education classes; having instruction in the core curriculum content and participating in extracurricular activities.

Role of Teacher (in general)

Teachers are the real architects of any nation. Teachers were ranked at a quite elevated position in the ancient Indian society. Among all professions; teaching is the noblest, the most difficult, and the most important as he has to mould and create the future of the country. He has to cultivate and nurture in him self-effacement, empathy, concern, kind-heartedness, the spirit of modesty, service and even much more as comparison to the others as he has to present an ideal example for his students.

It is the teacher only on whose shoulders the success, prosperity and development of any country lays its path. The magnitude of a country's success does not depend on high-ceilinged buildings, huge dams, projects and hefty defense forces etc. it solely dependent on the committed, steadfast, efficient and dedicated teachers present in its society, as these teachers can bring about the all-inclusive, balanced and harmonious development in the personality of their students. Teacher is responsible for the setting and maintenance of the tone of his classrooms, fabricating a warm environment, guiding and nurturing students and becoming role models etc. Some roles are as discussed below:

a. Providing Knowledge

The foremost important and fundamental role of a teacher is to provide knowledge to his students. A good teacher uses a lot many methods like lecturing, activity based methods etc. to make his student learn.

b. Maintaining Conducive Classroom Environment

Another essential role of a teacher is to create and then maintain a conducive classroom



environment where students can learn and explore productively.

c. Role Modeling

Though teachers' do not think themselves as role models but unintentionally and involuntarily they become the same. As most of the time of a child is spend around his or her teacher, the teacher becomes their role model. A teacher with high values, good character and positive approach influences and shapes the personality of his students.

d. Mentoring and Guiding

Mentoring and guiding again are natural role taken on by teachers. Mentoring and guiding are the ways through which teacher encourages students to endeavor to be the best they can. During the process of mentoring teacher listens to his students. By doing so, teachers inculcate the feeling of oneness and attachment in the students. This not only helps the students to develop confidence, they themselves want to do best.

e. Troubleshooter

Troubleshooting is another role played by teachers in classroom as well as outside the classroom. Teachers observe every student in class and outside classroom. Teachers pay attention towards the change in the emotional, behavioral or academic area. If something unusual is observed teacher look into the matter and provide best solution to the student to come out of that situation and be normal.

Role of Teacher (in inclusive classroom)

Hyam, (2004) there is a great change in the school and classroom environment nowadays. So, the role of teachers, in changing environment is also obligatory to change, for the smooth transition from mainstream education to inclusive education. If the teachers, who are the key changers are not committed or they are resistant to the change

then this transition will not yield the desired results at all. For the success of this change the teachers should be prepared in advance i.e. they should acquire new skills of teaching and learning, grasp new knowledge and prepare themselves to take new challenges, decisions and risks too. The overall sound development and success of the inclusive education and improvement in the student's performance totally depends on the understanding of the teacher about inclusive education, its demands and the role which he/she has to play in the classroom.

The roles and responsibilities of an inclusion teacher not only demand a high level of functioning and operation but a cordial and multi-tasking personality too. Teachers in an inclusive classroom are the one who take challenge to teach the normal and a special student under one roof with same love care and affection. To meet their learning requirements effectively the teacher should have a thorough understanding of the nature of abilities/ disabilities and the academic and non-academic problems exhibited by them.

Teacher in an inclusive classroom should be:

Able to take advantage of student's individual interests and use his/her internal motivation for developing needed aptitudes.

Able to fix high but alternative expectations which is suitable for the student.

Able to understand how to appreciate the all kinds of skills of the student academic as well as non-academic.

Able to recognize and retort to the diversity of students in classroom.

Able to accommodate the student with different learning manners and rates of learning by using a variety of teaching methods.



Able to utilize the techniques like learning, peer tutoring, cooperative teaching, team teaching and individualized instruction etc.

Aware of the rights of students with special needs.

Able to identify and surmount the barriers to learning.

Able to consult with and foster partnerships with parents, guardians, care givers and colleagues.

Able to use appropriate forms of evaluation and assessment.

Able to adapt instruction to the previous knowledge and beliefs of student.

Able to create an inclusive community that ranges beyond the concrete walls of the school.

Able to enhance the self-esteem and self-confidence of all students with and without special needs.

A right and positive attitude good sense of self efficacy, hard work, self-determination and a strong will power is needed in the teacher and it can help him/her to design and implement strategies that provide students a wider access to regular curriculum and make inclusive education a success.

Conclusion

Teachers portray a key role in determining and fixing the successful and productive placement of students with special needs. Teaching is not a tranquil and comfortable activity so, all members of the school fraternity should focus on sharing the work load and constructively problem solving. Embracing a student with special needs into the everyday activities of a normal education classroom cannot be accomplished without a tremendous and terrific amount of additional work and responsibilities. By integrating and

incorporating different strategies and approaches such as visual aids, structured & team teaching, and tiered assignments, role play techniques etc. a teacher can help a child with special needs to be successful in the normal classroom as well as socially, behaviorally, and academically. A well-planned, organized and welcoming classroom environment and with a teacher equipped with all techniques of special as well as normal classroom teaching can offer all the students with or without special needs, a chance and area to blossom and thus making inclusive education a success.

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