

Inclusive Education, Open Education and Livelihood Promotion

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Abstract

Inclusive Education has a remarkable background. It has its origin in Special Education and Integrated Education. To bring all kinds of students irrespective of their abilities or disabilities in the light of education, inclusion was necessary. The extension of Integrated Education is Inclusive Education. NCERT has played a significant role to make this idea successful. It follows the models of Full Inclusion and Partial Inclusion. In these models normal and disabled students can exchange their ideas with one another. Different adaptations were necessary to run Inclusive Education. In our society there are many people who have the interest or desire to get education but for the barriers of social or economical or religion, they cannot fulfil their dreams. In this regard Open education came up with a philosophy about the way people should produce, share and build on knowledge. Promoting collaboration is central to Open Education. It is open to all kinds of people irrespective of caste or creed or sex or religions. It is a lineage of Inclusive Education. Thus Inclusive Education, Open Education and Livelihood Promotion are linked to one another and are making the era a golden one.

Keywords: Adaptations, Inclusion, OERs, Livelihood.

Introduction

For time being education was optional. Those who wanted to be educated would come to the educational institution and educate themselves. And the educational programme should reach to all kinds of people irrespective of rich or poor,abled or disabled etc. – this incident is the recent phenomenon. In our society there are so many children who cannot get education in normal school through normal curriculum. Those children used to be ignored in every sphere of our society. With the passage of time to educate them the very word ‘special’ had been used and their education programme had become known as Special Education.

But we must be clear the fact that Special Education and Inclusive Education are different topics. Sometimes we mingle the two aspects. But it is wrong. It is correct that Inclusive Education has the origin in the Special Education. The evolution of Inclusive Education should be highlighted.

There was one time when whatever exception was regarded as sin in our society. Even human beings were not out of this. The situation got changed first in Europe and then

in America. In the 19th Century strategies to teach those special children had been discovered. Even their situation got new names. The situation of those was named Mental Retardation and Emotional disturbance.[1] After the French Revolution and American Revolution, the idea of republic became strong. So the citizens were well aware of their rights. From here first Special Education started in France. Jean Marc Gaspard Itard was called the pioneer of Special Education. The scenario got changed after 1850 for few reasons –

The guardians of those children expected that by sending their children to those schools, it would be a magical change but it didn't happen.

In 1859 for the theory of Darwin, people started thinking that these special children would lose in the struggle for existence. Psychology got recognition as science and in Psychology two matters are very important-sensation and perception. Both of them were lacking among those special children.[2]

For those reasons the education of those children were ignored. The decades of 1930 saw the resurgence of Special Education. In

this connection in 1975 one act was passed- Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Here it was said – “In order to receive funds under the Act beginning September 1978, every school system in the nation must make provision for a free appropriate public education for every child between 3 and 18. (Ages 3 to 21 by 1980) regardless of how or how seriously, he may be handicapped.”[3]

This Act was the introduction of Inclusive Education. But unfortunately the opportunity of education for those handicapped children was known as Mainstreaming. And here lies the difference between them. There were a lot of limitations of Special Education such as disparity of number, Geographical barrier, economic constraints, untrained teachers, social integration and most importantly Right to Education. For all of the above limitations a new system came into being- Integrated Education. It is such educational programme in which exceptional children attend classes with normal children or either a part or full time basis. It is placement of the disabled children in ordinary school with some specialised help and service. And the main base of it was not only access but to ensure success. For the Integrated Education, multiple effects can be seen among the children. Their mental, emotional and social development become rapid. Self confidence and self esteem also developed and so on.

The extension of Integrated Education is Inclusive Education. This is sometimes termed as Normalisation.

Concept

Inclusive means unity. The children who were out of the circle of education, must be given the right for education. UNESCO initiated an idea – Education For All. Inclusive Education tries to reach that goal. Integrated Education system tried to compensate the limitation of Special Education. But Inclusive Education is a wider concept. It includes all the children who are beyond education whatever the reasons may be- physical barrier or mental barrier or any other reason. Inclusive Education aims to bring every children under the roof of education by giving them all the advantages of education. Here Exclusion becomes Inclusion. Inclusive Education is the process of increasing and ascertaining the participation

of all students in culture, curricula and community of local mainstream schools.

NCERT says “Inclusive education means all learners young people- with or without disabilities being able to learn together in regular pre-school provisions, school and community educational settings with appropriate network of services.”[4] Besides Inclusion means creating environment responsive to the different developmental capacities, needs and potential for all children. For children with special needs, inclusion means a shift in services from simply trying to fit the child into ‘normal settings’ with supplemental support for their disabilities or special needs to promote the children, overall development in an optional setting.

Models

There are different views of different people regarding Inclusive Education. There are two models of such education – Model of Full Inclusion and Model of Partial Inclusion. The former model clarifies that all the disabled students should get the opportunities to undertake education with the normal children in the normal schools. There is no need to change the curriculum as well as the normal Time Table of the school. On the other hand in Partial Model the exceptional children get the opportunity to use the Resource Room once in a week. They get the chance in both the places. Sometimes Reverse Inclusion may be done where the normal children may come to the special schools. In a whole the inclusion is done in an arranged way.

For successful Inclusive Education some adaptations are necessary in the schools to make them ready. Such as classroom management and organisation. We must keep in mind that in such schools there are some children who are very sensitive and they need special care. So while imparting education we need to be sympathetic and careful. The aim of inclusive education is much higher and that is why we must be prepared for this beforehand. Education is such instrument which empower any human being whether normal or exceptional. So it is the well initiative to include all sorts of children under the roof of education.

Our Constitution says of equality in different ways. Ideally all the nations are responsible

for equal education but it has been stressed in different time under different committees and different commissions. So it is clear that this equality faces some obstacles ages and ages.

Inclusive Education not only arranges the opportunity but also removes the barriers so that everyone can get the equality in education. But it is amazing that 'opportunity' is not synonymous to all people. It varies. If it is regarded as passive, it is not opportunity then. It is so because the people who come from the so called 'lower section' of our society do not know about their rights. They are deprived more. Equal opportunity in education will be successful at that time when it will reach to 'special people' according to their needs and demands. Inclusive Education aims for it and Open Education collaboratively is trying to reach its goal.[5]

Another important aspect of Inclusive Education is that it stresses on the ability of those children, not on their disability. What can they do or able to do? Never help them for pity but to give them their proper Democratic Rights, we must join hands together.

Inclusive education started with a perspective to include the students who were out of the circle of education. Here we need to understand the fact that there are some children who want to get education but for some unavoidable circumstances they are deprived of education. There are many barriers which prevent them to get education. The reasons may be social barrier or geographical barriers or economic barriers or some other barriers.

Open Education and livelihood

In this regard one system was introduced in the education system which is called Open Education. The idea of Open Education is inherent in the very name only. 'Open' means the door of such education is open for all students who do not get the opportunity for education but have strong desire to get it. It is also an approach of Inclusive Education.

Open Education is a philosophy about the way people should produce, share and build on knowledge. The idea believes that everyone in the world should have the access to high quality educational experiences and resources and they work to eliminate barriers to this

goal. Promoting collaboration is central to open education. As the Open Education Consortium says – "sharing is probably the most basic characteristic of education: education is sharing knowledge, insights and information with others, upon which new knowledge, skills, ideas and understanding can be built." [6]

Regarding Open Education system the resources cannot be left out. These are called Open Educational Resources (OERs). Applying open licences to educational materials allows educators to collaborate when building materials specifically differentiated for their students. This helps educators to work together when ensuring consistency among their materials. Some educators suggest that OERs might help reduce costs associated with producing and distributing course materials in both primary and secondary educational institutions. Teachers as well as students benefit from open educational resources when they access the materials. To supplement the education they might receive in a classroom.

At present there are many open education programmes worldwide. One of them is MOOCs. Massive Open Online Courses accessible to anyone with a computer and access to the internet. It is called 'massive' because here a huge number of students can enrol than the other traditional educational institutions. Today many colleges and universities have joined organisations committed to providing high quality education through MOOCs.[7]

To include students in the field of education from all sections of our society researches are not enough only but initiatives are also important what the open education has taken. In India IGNOU, NSOU are successful organisations that provide high quality education to include students in a large number.

These help in lifelong learning. Open courses provide such education that satisfy the demands of persons. Even the curriculum is very easy and flexible. Here some courses are taught that directly create opportunities for livelihood. Oral instruction is very less here. Some high quality technologies are used to impart the teaching. Pupils can acquire the education according to their time and likes. Here is no bars of age or sex or races. From

different corner of our society people come up to education and make their lives enriched. And it has been said earlier that open education is the extension of inclusive education. So it is the good weapon to eradicate the different barriers prevailing in the society. Actually there are different medium of Distance Education. Such as Correspondence Education, Education through Radio, Education through Television and Open Education.

Moore has properly uttered – “Distance Education is all arrangements for providing instruction through print or electronic communications media to persons engaged in planned learning in a place or time different from that of the instructor or instructors.”[8]

Education will be successful at that time when it will help in leading their lives in future. Earning livelihood can be done in different ways. There are many persons who get their livelihood without formal education. These kinds of people are to work very hard to meet their both hands. They are to work for a long time of a day but that also don't help them to survive peacefully in the society. So it is obvious that people want to get peace and rest after working and earning their livelihood. In this education helps those to earn and provide for their family. The value of education is always appreciated. Educated people get opportunities for jobs if they are well aware. But sometimes it is not possible to educate ourselves to undertake formal education. That time non-formal education come up with opportunities. Open education is such non-formal education. There are various vocational courses that are very useful. Even many short term and diploma courses are available which the students may opt for them. With the other jobs they can continue the courses that ultimately result in prosperous livelihood. As it follows the rules of inclusion, different kinds of people from different sections of society get the chances as well as advantages of open education. At present NSOU work successfully in fulfilling the dream of getting livelihood and make people self-dependent. This institutions have different study centres in the districts to make the courses available for the people. Besides they have the scope for research work that creates an environment of thesis.

Initiatives: NSOU is such open education institution that has recently initiated a programme called VKC – Village Knowledge Centre. Through ICT it is trying to reach to the common people of our society especially in remote areas. It brings access a range of services, content and information to those people. It tries to empower the villagers. It motivates farmers and address agricultural issues professionally. In livelihood promotion it is a kind of boon. It creates avenues for income generation for women through vocational training. NSOU introduce an e-governance initiative to reach the un-reached, un-served and underserved areas more effectively by using ICT. The university is also planning to introduce more VKCs in the remote areas for benefit of its students.[9]

Livelihood promotion is critical matter in present era. The Govt. of India 11th Five Year Plan and the Approach Paper to the 12th Five Year Plan envisaged an inclusive approach towards the persons who are treated disables. The programmes are trying to uplift those persons. Inclusive Education is the gateway of livelihood promotion. It creates an opportunity for them to get proper way to live their lives in well manner.

Conclusion

Thus Open Education creates an opportunity for livelihood. It is found somewhere that for next grade in professional field this open education helps a lot. The in-service people who are packed up with their busy schedule cannot undergo a regular course. But for their promotion, educational qualification must be enhanced. In this case to them without open education, there is no other opportunity. As a result they can continue their service and with it they can complete their higher study. It impacts directly to their livelihood.

The present era is a time for work. At this point of time no man or woman sit idly. They seek opportunity for jobs. But barriers of finance or others prevent them from the chance of education. They are to maintain their family or other regular jobs. So another regular course cannot be continued simultaneously. So they opt for open education. And the open education follows the rule of inclusion. As a result without any discrimination people can continue their

personal education and can fit themselves for better livelihood and maintain family happily.

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