
INCLUSIVE AND QUALITY EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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Abstract

“The true development of a Nation is developing together without exempting anybody”

It is the right of each and every child to have access to the quality education, and while efforts to increase learning in schools are critical, they should not come at the cost of excluding them with disabilities. The destiny of disabled children can be changed by adding them to the mainstream education through which we can change the destiny of nation too. Inclusive education is the tool that can bring the children with special education need into brighter side of the world from the dark. By giving a quality education to the children with disabilities will provide them the opportunity and strength to make their life on their own. In this paper, we have discussed the need for Quality education and stressed the need of those youngsters with special educational needs.

Keywords: *Quality education, Children with special needs, Inclusive education,*

Introduction

Achieving the academic fulfillment and career success became the end goals of human life. But when did that start? Is this what we really want to achieve as a society and as individuals. Education is only good if it helps our children to succeed outside the school, in having good careers and happy lives.

India is the second largest populated country which consists an overall of 17% of world population. While the population rate goes on increasing poverty made a team with the population rate is increasing. To make the nation as a developed country it is our duty to eradicate poverty from the nation. Offering education to the masses in poverty to get a job instead of being an unskilled labor is the conventional way of thinking to get the people out of poverty. Providing Quality education for all will lead the nation in a development path. While speaking about education we have to consider all kind of students without exempting the students with special educational needs.

Children with Special Needs

They're children who face difficulty in learning due to some disability or combination of disabilities. Special-needs person includes those who have:

- Mental Retardation - it causes them to mentally develop more slowly than other children.
- Speech and Language Impairment – includes some problems like late or misunderstand to express themselves or understanding others.
- Physical Disability - vision problem, cerebral palsy, or other conditions.

- Learning Disabilities – this will misrepresent messages from their senses.
- Emotional Disabilities – It may cause antisocial or other behavioral problems.

Children with special needs may have slight learning disabilities or deep cognitive impairment; they may have an illness or food allergies. A child's special needs may include mental developmental delays that catch up quickly or remain embedded.

Importance of Focusing Children with Special Educational Needs

Even today Education is an unfulfilled dream for millions of school going children who cannot read or write. While tackling this learning crisis world has to simultaneously focus and take actions in bringing the children with disabilities and other disadvantages into school for the betterment of the individual as well as the humanity.

According to the International Labor Organization, around the world individuals with disabilities to be of working age is nearly between 785 to 975 million, but most do not work. While there is some individual success, but as a group, they often face unequal poverty and joblessness.

There is a risk of losing future by a number of defenseless children due to their disability. In a 2015 July paper, "Towards a Disability Inclusive Education, there are 58 million out-of-school children at the primary level alone, an estimated one-third have a disability", said by a team of global expert. Developing countries across the world are starting to make progress in the right direction.

Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is a great tool which allows children with disabilities and without disabilities to sit and learn together in the same environment. Attending classes like this will make a drastic positive change among the children with disabilities. Instead of separating them from normal students allowing them to be with all and learn together will make positive attitude among the children with special educational needs.

According to Rick and Elliott, 2010, Over the past twenty years education has become a significant issue within the international development sector and likewise, the term inclusive education has grown to become a familiar term.

India Confronting Disability in Education

In bringing all the children into elementary school including the students with disabilities, the Right to Education Act (2009) - Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan program plays a vital role nationwide. The number of children who got an advantage due to the programme is larger than the population of the seventh largest country in the world, Nigeria. Today 90% of children with disability and special needs got enrolled in schools which is 6% higher than the enrollment level in the year 2012 to 2013. This is a total of 2.5 million children.

In addition, over 116,000 children with special needs receive home-based education under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Identifying and serving the remaining offspring with special needs in India, and raising the quality of education for them is the biggest challenge which is ongoing.

Indian states are offering a great support to the disadvantaged children through this innovative programmes. In Bihar state's Jehanabad district, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs)— across the country for girls from underprivileged communities residential school facilities have been set up—now they are trying to help the girls with visual impairment to hook up with the lost learning.

A visually impaired girl named Reebha Kumari is now studying in the government mainstream upper primary education due to the intensive support from some of the teachers.

Another girl named, Gudiya Kumari, studying in Grade 7, describes her own early fears about going to school and what kind of teachers she would have to face. She recalls how the other girls due to curiosity surround them to know how they are managing without vision. "Progressively, they comprehended we are indeed proficient in studying," she says. This shows the positive development in India towards Inclusive education.

Rights of Children with Disability to Quality Education

The First Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) Meeting promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities to Quality Education was organized on Tuesday, 17 January 2017 at UNESCO House, New Delhi. The meeting was part of UNESCO's project 'Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities to Quality Education' under the United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD). UNESCO is one of the three partners of this Multi-Partner Trust Fund project working alongside UNICEF and MGIEP to support the full implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD).

The main purpose of UNESCO's project has been to promote the Rights of CWDs to Quality Education through the effective implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD 2016), the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE, 2009) and the UNCRPD by facilitating the creation of focal points at different levels and sectors in the government through the formation of the IAWG as a coordination mechanism.

The meeting was attended by over twenty participants from diverse backgrounds working in the field of disability rights and included representatives from line ministries, government institutions, civil society organizations and UN agencies. It provided a platform to discuss how the different stakeholders can come together to work for the promotion of disability rights and support the Government of India in a realization of its vision set out in the national laws and the country's international obligations.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, Director, and Representative, UNESCO New Delhi said that the creation of the IAWG is aligned to Article 33 of the UNCRPD that requires

the Member States to establish coordination mechanisms within the Government and at different levels for facilitating related actions in different sectors. He remarked the meeting was taking place at an opportune moment as education and Rights of CWDs are a high priority on the national and international agenda. He further highlighted the country's achievement with regard to the recent passing of the RPWD Bill 2016.

The Government of India has been working closely with the UN family in India for preparing United Nations Sustainable Development Framework and inclusive quality education has been recognized as a top priority in the 2018-2022 agenda.

Role of Policies and Legislative Frameworks

We have registered some of the International and National level policy frameworks which are relevant to quality education and education to children with disabilities.

Constitutional Safeguards: everyone has the right to equality of status and opportunity states our Constitution of India (26 November 1949) clearly. It ensures for all its citizens' equality before the law, non-discrimination and the right to life and liberty (Article 14, 15, 19 and 21 respectively of the Constitution).

Kothari Commission (1964-66): The Kothari Commission officially first addressed issues of access and participation by all. Irrespective of caste, creed, community, religion, economic condition and social status of the children there should be a common school system was stressed by the Commission.

National Policy on Education (NPE) - 1986: The NPE brought the fundamental issue of equality center stage. Requirements of the disabled children were clearly focused on section number 4.6 of the policy.

Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act, 1995: In India the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 is the most revolutionary legislation in the history of special education.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA): SSA has been operational since 2000-01 in partnership with state governments to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education. This adopts a ZERO rejection policy and uses an approach of converging various existing schemes and programmes.

Conclusion

Lack of resources and trained teachers are sometimes pointed out as a barrier to giving inclusive education to children with disabilities. Removing the hurdles in accessing education and learning by the kids with disabilities are prerequisites for the realization of Education for All. Instead of being an obstacle the education policies and practice must include all learners to ensure every child has access to quality education. The way to prosperity for individuals and the society will be shown by Inclusive education. This prosperity will, in turn, lead to a more peaceful and sustainable development of humanity.

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