

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION:

Inclusive Education is a global movement that aims to provide equal access to education for all students, regardless of differences like disability, ethnicity or socioeconomic status. The goal is to ensure that all students have a fair chance to learn and develop skills and that they are not discriminated against. It is the most effective way to give all children a fair chance to go to school, learn and develop the skills they need to thrive. Inclusive Education means all children in the same classroom, in the same school. It means real learning opportunities for groups who have traditionally been excluded- not only children with disabilities, but speakers of minority languages too. Inclusive Education values the unique contributions students of all backgrounds bring to the classroom and allow diverse groups to grow side by side, to the benefit of all.

Inclusive Systems require changes at all levels of society. At the school level, teachers must be trained, buildings must be refurbished and students must receive accessible learning materials. At the community level, stigma and discrimination must be tackled and individuals need to be educated on the benefit of inclusive education. At the national level, Governments must align laws and policies with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities, and regularly collect and analyse data to ensure children are reached with effective services.

MEANING:

Inclusive Education is an approach to education that emphasizes the participation of all students, regardless of their abilities, disabilities or backgrounds, in the same educational environment. It involves creating a supportive and accommodating learning environment that values diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all students. It is a philosophy that ensures all students, regardless of their differences, have access to quality

education and a welcoming learning environment. It broadly encompasses the teaching-learning environment which is welcoming and supports all learners regardless of learning styles, abilities and disabilities. Inclusive Education means all children in the same classrooms, in the same schools. It means real learning opportunities for groups who have traditionally been excluded- not only children with disabilities, but speakers of minority languages too. Maria Montessori an Italian physician and educator, made significant contributions to inclusive education by emphasizing the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream classroom.

Inclusive Education means that all students attend and are welcomed by their neighbourhood schools in age appropriate, regular classes and are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the life of the school. Inclusive Education is about ensuring access to quality education for all students by effectively meeting their diverse needs in a way that is responsive, accepting, respectful and supportive. Students participate in the education program in a common learning environment with support to diminish and remove barriers and obstacles that may lead to exclusion. It is carried out in a common learning environment; that is, an educational setting where students from different backgrounds and with different abilities learn together in an inclusive environment. Common learning environments are used for the majority of the students' regular instructions hours and may include classrooms, libraries, gym, performance theatres, music rooms, cafeterias, playgrounds and the local community. A common learning environment is not a place where students with intellectual disabilities or other special needs learn in isolation from their peers.

BENEFITS OF COMMON LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (INCLUSIVE EDUCATION)

- It enables each student to fully participate in the learning environment that is designed for all students and is shared with peers in the chosen educational setting.
- It provides a positive climate, promote a sense of belonging and ensure student progress toward appropriate personal, social, emotional and academic goals;
- They are responsive to individual learning needs by providing sufficient levels of support and applying student-centered teaching practices and principles.
- Common learning environment: an inclusive environment where instruction is designed to be delivered to students of mixed ability and with their peer group in the community school, while being responsive to their individual needs as a learner, and used for the majority of the students' regular instruction hours.
- It promotes social inclusion and diversity.

- It enhances academic and social outcomes for all students.
- It fosters a sense of belonging and self worth.
- It develops empathy and understanding among students for each and every kind of students.
- It prepares students for an increasingly diverse society.
- It is a commitment to continuous improvement- Inclusive education applies to all members of the school community, including those with disabilities, speakers of minority languages, and others who have traditionally been excluded.
- It is a focus on attitudes and methods- Inclusive Education ensures that all learners can access mainstream education.
- It is a belief in the dignity of all people- Inclusive Education is based on the belief that all people have inherent dignity and equal worth, and are entitled to equal access and opportunity.
- It has a welcoming environment- Inclusive Education creates a learning environment that is welcoming and supportive for all students, regardless of their learning styles or abilities.
- It gives equal access- Inclusive Education ensures that all students have equal access to education, including students with disabilities, those who speak minority languages and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds.
- It helps one to value differences- Inclusive Education recognizes and values the differences of all students, and ensures that marginalized groups have a voice in decision-making processes.
- It works on systemic changes- Inclusive Education involves transforming the entire education system, including legislation, policy, financing, administration, design, delivery and monitoring of education.
- Mainstream learning- Inclusive Education means that children with special educational requirements are educated within a mainstream learning environment, rather than in a specialist school.
- It has improved academic performances
- It helps in increased understanding of diversity- Students learn to appreciate and accept the differences of their peers, which can lead to a broader perspective.
- It helps in creating better social skills- Students develop social skills like empathy, problem-solving and listening to others.

- It has increased access to resources by all the students of the classroom. Etc.

DEMERITS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:

- Potential for inadequate support for students with severe disabilities.
- Increased workload and stress for teachers.
- Possible negative impact on academic achievement of non-disabled students.
- Need for significant resources and funding.
- Potential for stigma or labeling of students with disabilities.
- Lack of resources- Schools may not have enough money to provide the resources and support students with diverse needs such as specialized teachers, adaptive equipment and staff professional development.
- Teacher Training- Teachers need to be trained to adapt their teaching methods and classroom activities to meet the needs of all students.
- Social Barriers- Students with disabilities or other differences may face bullying or discrimination from their peers.
- Environmental barriers: Doors, passageways, stairs, ramps and recreational areas may be barriers to inclusive education.
- Teacher stress- Teachers may experience more stress due to keeping up with changes and new students coming in and out of the class.
- One-on-one attention: Students may receive less one-on-one attention.
- Student adaptation- Students may have trouble adapting to this type of environment.
- Distractions- The environment may allow for more distractions. The normal students may ask for one thing and the special one may ask for the other. This may cause issue for the educator.
- Student feeling- A child may feel singled out. In this atmosphere of inclusive classroom this may happen that the shift of concentration from a child to the other may make the child feel left out.
- One-on-one aids- A little training instead of the special degree will be needed so that the child don't feel left apart.etc.

OBJECTIVES:

Inclusive Education promotes the social value of equality; inclusive setting leads to independent thoughts, positive competency and improved self-esteem. All the children are

enriched by the opportunity in which they learn and care for each other and hence gain the skills and values needed for community living. It has many objectives like-

- Ensuring equal access- Inclusive Education aims to ensure that all students have access to education and learning opportunities.
- Meeting individual needs- Inclusive Education allows students with disabilities to receive an education that meets their needs in a regular classroom.
- Promoting social inclusion- inclusive Education aims to ensure that no child is left behind from mainstream education, regardless of their differences.
- Fostering social and emotional development- Inclusive Education aims to promote the social and emotional development of all students, including those with special needs.
- Differentiated Instruction- Inclusive Education recognizes that no two learners are alike, so it provides opportunities for students to learn and be assessed in a variety of ways.
- Peer Support- Inclusive Education uses peer support arrangements to help students with significant disabilities to participate more actively in class activities.
- To provide educational opportunities to all students, irrespective of their backgrounds and capabilities.
- To provide appropriate vocational services to students with disabilities and direct them to careers suited for them.
- To provide Transition service and develop a post-secondary school plan for each student with a disability, so that they can acquire help and adjust at the higher level of education.
- To provide a coordinated and comprehensive instructional program from kindergarten to high school.
- To make the use of latest ICT based and non-ICT based teaching learning tools in classroom to enhance the learning capabilities of not just disabled students but also fully abled students as well.
- It helps teachers in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of students and provide appropriate assistance wherever and whenever required.
- It helps in developing the value of tolerance and acceptance towards persons who are different in looks, colour, race and gender and also in skills or mental capabilities.
- Helps in getting parents to be actively involved in their child's education by constantly communicating and coordinating the child's learning activities. Etc.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NORMAL CLASSROOM AND INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM:

There are various differences between a normal classroom and an inclusive classroom and studies has showed that inclusive classroom is apparently more beneficial for today's learners as compared to the normal classroom. The Inclusive Classroom environment will look different from school to school, but the model instills the idea that all students, no matter their ability level, should learn together in one space. An inclusive classroom features students of all learning styles and ability levels. The differences includes:

- Focus- Inclusive Education focuses on the diverse needs of all students, while traditional classroom teaching focuses on the needs of the majority.
- Approach- inclusive Education involves differentiated instruction, accommodations and modifications, whereas traditional teaching often uses a one-size-fits all approach.
- Environment- Inclusive Education creates a supportive and accommodating learning environment, whereas traditional classrooms may not be as flexible.
- Assessment- Inclusive Education often uses alternative assessments and evaluations, whereas traditional teaching relies on standardized tests.
- Teacher training- Inclusive Education requires teachers to have specialized training and support, whereas traditional teaching may not require this.
- An inclusive classroom provides a more inclusive environment for all students, regardless of their identity, learning preferences or education.
- Education- In an Inclusive classroom, students feel supported and has a sense of belonging. In resource for students, and students are expected to learn outside of school.
- Learning- In an Inclusive Classroom, students with disabilities are not expected to confirm to the general education model, and the classroom adapts to each student's needs. In a normal classroom, the teacher regulates the flow of information and knowledge.
- Activities- In an Inclusive classroom, students work together, read together, have discussions, and socialize with one another. In a normal classroom, students are expected to develop their knowledge of a subject through homework exercises.
- Benefits- In an Inclusive classroom, students learn about difference and how to get along with others. They also come to respect their own individuality and that of others.

CONCLUSION:

Overall, Inclusive Education and inclusive classroom aims to create a learning environment that values and sours the diversity of all students, while traditional classroom teaching may not always be able to meet the needs of all students. It is all about creating an atmosphere which is not only beneficial for the disabled but also for the students of backward section either in case of caste, creed, race, colour and gender. It is also for the financially discriminated students. Inclusive Education helps the educator to create an environment in which normal kids can be empathetic towards the others. It helps in creating a moralistic environment in the school that helps the child to become more social.

Every coin has two sides and so did the inclusive education and inclusive classroom. It has lot of merits and some demerits too. It'll be better to call them challenges in the revolutionary field of education. This kind of classrooms needs especially trained teachers and teaching learning materials. It is essential for the educator to make the normal kids realize that how beautiful and meaningful an inclusive classroom is. The teacher should also keep in mind that when it is giving attention to one child the other should not feel left out. In spite of the challenges in the way inclusive education is having a rapid success in the field of education which is beneficial for the students as well as the society.

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