



STAKEHOLDERS RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Dandiker Suryakant N.

Assist Professor, Mlmn College Of Education Jhothi nagar Chikkamagalur, Karnataka State.

ABSTRACT :

The concept of Inclusive Education has gained more importance in recent years. It is a flexible educational system for children and young people with special needs. Inclusive education provides opportunity for all Children with Special Needs to actively participate in the general education system. Earlier the children with special Needs were educated in separate schools known as special education. It is a parallel education system to the general education. In that system the children with special Needs are away from the general or mainstream education.

The more number of children with abilities and strengths remain unnoticed or unrecognized around us. This inborn potential in them is often ignored by just looking at their disabilities. Inclusion in this context simply means “the state of being included”. Considering the same as a human right, it aims at including all children irrespective of caste, creed, gender, disability and any other attribute which under normal conditions is used in segregation and – demarcation. Therefore Inclusive Education works on the philosophy of ‘togetherness in education’. This brings to all children into the same classroom regardless of their strengths and weaknesses. To make this happen we need to have the involvement of stakeholders. A Stakeholder in inclusive education means any person who has a stake or personal interest in the school activities and work for the welfare of all the students and the school.

KEYWORD: Stakeholders, Inclusive Education, Responsibilities.

I. Introduction:

“The Problem is not how to wipe out the differences but how to unite with the differences intact”

-RabinderNath Tagore

The more number of children with abilities and strengths remain unnoticed or unrecognized around us. This inborn potential in them is often ignored by just looking at their disabilities. Inclusion in this context simply means “the state of being included”. Considering the same as a human right, it aims at including all children irrespective of caste, creed, gender, disability and any other attribute which under normal conditions is used in segregation and– demarcation. Therefore it is the Responsibility of the community to treat all and involve all

members as equals as on par with the Indian Constitution, which also guarantees provision of Equal access to opportunities.

The concept of Inclusive Education has gained importance in recent years. It is of the idea that all students be educated in the same classroom regardless of their diversity in learning needs. Inclusive education is a flexible educational system for children and young people with special needs. Inclusive education provides opportunity for all Children with Special Needs to actively participate in the general education system.

Earlier the Children with Special Needs were educated in separate schools known as Special Education. It is a parallel education system to the General education. In that system the Children with Special Needs are away from the general or mainstream education.

It is the Right of every child including children with Special Education to be included in the mainstream education. The Salamanca Statement on Special Needs Education (1994) is the major step to start inclusive Education worldwide. As part of World Conference on Special Needs Education, 92 Countries and 25 International Agencies assembled in Salamanca-Spain. The Conference proclaimed that education is the basic right for every child and children with Special Needs must have access to regular schools with adapted education. They also state that regular schools with an Inclusive orientation are the most effective means of building up an inclusive society.

Inclusive Education is an integral part of general education system which allows Children with Special needs to enrol in age appropriate class in their neighbourhood regular school with adequate support.

- II. **Stakeholders in inclusive education:** Inclusive Education works on the philosophy of 'togetherness in education'. This brings to all children into the same classroom regardless of their strengths and weaknesses. To make this happen we need to have the involvement of stakeholders. A Stakeholder in inclusive education means any person who has a stake or personal interest in the school activities and work for the welfare of all the students and the school.
- I. **Role of Regular Classroom teacher:** In an Inclusive classroom the responsibility of all children lies with the General Education teacher. Her main duty is to create a classroom environment favourable for all students to achieve their academic and behavioural goal. The key role of General Education teacher is as follows:
 - Prepare educational plan for children identified with special needs
 - Identify each student's needs and abilities
 - Collaborate with special teacher in assessment
 - Prepare Individual Educational Plan (IEP) with help of special teacher.
 - Implement IEP with help of special teacher.
 - Regular monitoring of the IEP Programme
 - Identify and use appropriate teaching techniques
 - Maintain a record of students' progress
 - Provide information to special teacher regarding curriculum
 - Take active role in delivering the instruction – (teaching & learning)
 - Promote cooperative and collaborative learning in classroom
 - Make sure of participation of parents in the educational programme
 - Promote positive relationship among students

- Create a classroom environment accessible for all students.
- Guide the students to achieve the Educational Goal set(Goal set based on the needs of the students)

II. **Role of Special Education Teacher:** The Special Education Teacher has the role of a facilitator in the Inclusive Education Programme. She works in collaboration with the General Education Teacher and the Parent. The level of collaboration depends on the diversity of the learning needs of the children. Some of the responsibilities of Special Education Teachers in Inclusive Education are:

- Development, implementation and evaluation of IEPs for children with Special Needs
- Orient the general classroom teacher about the needs of children with Special Needs and the need for IEPs
- Support general education teacher to modify the curricular content for Children with Special Needs
- Help the regular classroom teacher to select and use appropriate teaching strategies for Children with Special Needs
- Maintain IEP record and other special educational records
- Organize meetings with other stakeholders such as parents, general teachers, school administrators etc.
- Liaising with parents and other agencies in the community working for Children with Special Needs
- To develop self-confidence and self-esteem in students with disabilities
- Provide guidance and counselling services to children's and parents
- Provide individual help to children with special needs in classroom whenever needed
- Inform parents about their child's progress and maintain a regular communication with them

III. **Role of School Administrators:** School administrators are a group of individuals having a significant role in making policies and procedures and setting educational aims and standards. To make inclusion a success the school administrators are an important component. Among the administrators we have the head of the school administration viz the principal or the School headmasters. School principal is the key person to facilitate systematic changes and adapt inclusion policy for the school system. He is an educational leader and responsible to guide teachers and other institutional staffs towards the goal of a truly inclusive school. The following are roles and responsibilities of a principal:

- Plan and implement govt. policies and programmes that facilitate learning
- Enroll all students including Children with Special Needs
- Ensure a non-discriminatory environment in the school
- Provide ongoing support to instructional team members (Multi-disciplinary Team)
- Orient general teachers about the rights of Children with Special Needs
- Arrange in-service programme for teachers
- Take appropriate decisions in instructional issues
- Promote healthy peer relationship
- Organize school resources for effective implementation of inclusive education
- Provide administrative support for quality professional development and through which quality of education for children with special needs and normal children is enhanced.

- IV. **Role of the Government:** Government is the prime agency responsible for implementing inclusive education policy in the country. In our country the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE) are involved in programme planning and implementation aiming at upliftment of individuals with Special Needs. These Central Government Ministries plan policies and programmes for individuals with Special needs and implement these policies through the state government. Effective implementation necessitates good networking with other Ministries. The key role of Government in inclusive education is:
- Make new policies and reform the existing policies based on the needs of the community
 - Provide guidelines to school administrators to implement Inclusive Education Policy
 - Provide financial assistance to schools or NGOs working on inclusion
 - Distribute aids and appliances to students with special needs
 - Ensure that alternative Educational provisions are made for Children with Special Needs who are not able to be included in the inclusive classroom
 - Give guidelines to the school authority to make their institution physically accessible for Special Needs Children
 - Conduct and promote research in the area of Inclusive Education
 - Develop Teacher Training Programmes for upgrading skills in handling Special Need Children
 - It is the responsibility of the Ministry to maintain Memorandum of Understanding with other Ministries and State Governments
- V. **Role of Community:** Community is considered as an extended family for the child. In a developing country like India most of the people live in the rural areas. It is the responsibility of the community to ensure the inclusion of Children with Special Needs in their neighbourhood school. As a stakeholder Community should be ready to use its resources and to maintain a good communication with the local school and other NGOs in the community working for individuals with Special Needs. The other roles of Community members are:
- To identify Special Need children's in the community
 - Conduct awareness classes for the community members on Rights of Persons with Disabilities
 - Be an active member in the school activities
 - Take part in school meetings
 - Identify local volunteers to work for the disabled
 - Give awareness to the parents about the Govt. programmes and policies for their Children with Special Needs.
 - Networking with agencies working for the disabled in the community
 - Supply human resources as and when required for training/ awareness
- VI. **Role of Non-Governmental Organizations:** An NGO means a private voluntary organization working independently to achieve a common goal. NGOs interact closely with the community and bring out desirable changes in the community. Each NGO plays a significant *role* in facilitating *inclusive education* through different activities. Some important roles of the NGOs are:
- Advocate the rights of Special children with Disabilities
 - Help Children with Special Needs and their parents to access information about various government schemes and provisions
 - Approach Govt. Ministries to adopt successful strategies
 - Liaising with local community and the Govt. Ministries

- Develop projects and conduct researches in the area of inclusion
- Organize camps for early identification of disability
- Organizing training programmes for rural rehabilitation workers, parents and local governing bodies
- Sensitize the need for inclusive education

VII. **Role of Parents:** Parents are the first teachers and they play an important role in the education of their children. Parental involvement in education is one predictor of students' success in career. Parent - teacher association is an important aspect to determine the effectiveness of inclusive education. They educate their child by all means and the rule of the day is that parents of Children with Special Needs have a 'say' in how education should be provided to Children with Special Needs.

Some of the specific roles of parents in inclusive education are:

- Parents are the decision makers about the education of their children with disability. (eg. they have the right to choose the type of school for their child with Disabilities -Inclusive School or Special School)
- Should be aware about the Legal Rights, benefits and concessions available for their children
- Be involved in planning, developing and implementation of their child's Individualized Education Programme along with teachers.
- Encourage their child to participate in group activities with normal children
- Develop confidence in their child with disability
- Responsible to act on the communications received from the school
- Attend Parent- teacher Association meetings
- Discuss their expectations about their child to the class teacher
- Be fully aware of the Rights of the child to have an Inclusive Education
- Should take an active role in Programme planning Committee and give suggestions for developing IEPs
- Responsible for forming SHGs for Persons with Disabilities
- Ensure that each child with special needs get appropriate educational services
- Arrange vocational skill training programmes for Persons with Disabilities

VIII. **Role of Normal Peer:** The normal children who are studying with the Special Needs Children in the inclusive classroom also have an equal role contributing to the success in inclusion. The normal peer's role as a stakeholder is:

- Act as a good role model for academic, social and behavioural skills
- Accept the Individual differences in children
- Develop positive peer relationships
- Render support within and outside the classroom
- Help students with Special Needs to achieve their IEP goals
- Develop self-confidence and self-esteem in Special Need Children
- Enable active participation in peer mediated strategies and intervention programmes in the classroom

IX. **Role of students with special needs in inclusive education:** Children with Special Needs mean those who have some difficulty in learning or acquiring skills and they need some kind of assistance in learning. Inclusive education is designed to meet the learning needs of

Children with Special Needs in their own neighbourhood school. Among all the stakeholders' children with special needs is the important and the main beneficiaries of the programme. Without them the concept of inclusive education cannot reach its meaning. As a stakeholder Children with Special Education have some roles to play.

- Develop a positive understanding and attitude towards learning
- Interact with peer group and Learn positive values from the school.
- Select good role models with the help of teachers
- Develop a sense of belonging(eg. active involvement in group activities in the classroom)
- The student must be a regular in the class
- Acquire skills in using assistive technology
- Actively participate in learning activities
- Participate in all co-curricular/extra-curricular activities
- Achieve IEP goals with help of teachers and parents
- Acquire and practice positive behaviours
- Enhance skills through training
- Participate actively in peer mediated strategies (eg. Cooperative learning, Class wide peer tutoring etc.)

X. CONCLUSION:

For long-time Children with disabilities were educated in separate class or in separate school. People got used to the idea that Education meant Special Education. But we know that when children are educated together, positive academic and social outcome occur for all children. Inclusive Education occurs when there is ongoing promotion, planning support and commitment. Ordinary or extraordinary things can happen in inclusive classrooms.

In order to make inclusive education a reality, a number of components in the system have to fall in place. It is true that the Government of India has made a major finance allocation to achieve "Education for All" through SSA. The success depends on stakeholders suitably prepared and involved. All sectors of society have a stake directly or indirectly in children's education. The Success of inclusion lies in the coordinated and collaborate efforts of all the stakeholders

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