

Inclusive Education and Job Satisfaction of Teachers: A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract

The concept of Inclusive Education has come to the forefront in the recent past. However, the concept itself means differently to different people. Towards the concern of the disabled or differently able students, the concept of education has been associated with three different models, namely, Segregated, Integrated and Inclusive. The Segregated model occurs when students with disabilities learn completely separate from other students. This model sees child with disability as a problem in the system and plans to solve the same with special and segregated effort. Integrated model provides for the integration of the disabled in the mainstream schooling with some adaptation. Integrated model may be a step forward towards Inclusive education, but it is not Inclusive Education. Inclusive education is a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners. It involves restructuring the culture, policies and practices in schools so that they can respond to the diversity of students. In fact Inclusive education is real education. Education is essential for all. It should take care to the need of the each and every individual in an individual manner. The individual may be disable or differently able. Here comes the role of the effective and motivated teacher. An effective teacher can only make the Inclusive Education effective. For teacher to be effective, apart from essential traits, he should also be a satisfied teacher. As inclusive education demands very personalized way of teaching learning, a teacher satisfied and motivated with his profession is a must. Thus, there is a need for looking towards the teachers with their job

satisfaction perspective, so that the teacher is motivated towards being an active part of Inclusive Education. This paper is an attempt to provide a conceptual framework wherein Inclusive education and Job satisfaction of teachers are closely interlinked.

Key words

Segregated model, Integrated model, Inclusive education, Job satisfaction

Children with disabilities count for one-third of all children out-of-school worldwide. In developing countries, the numbers are even more staggering, with 90% of all children with disabilities out-of-school. Although it is necessary that children with disabilities receive an education, it is also important to know that the type of education that children with disabilities receive. There are three basic types of education for these disabled or differently abled children, although many different models of classroom organization and teaching are available within each type.

Segregated Education

Segregated education occurs when students with disabilities learn completely separate from their peers. Segregated education takes place in the form of special schools created specifically for the education of students with disabilities, or in completely separate classrooms for students with disabilities. Segregated education considers the child as the problem in the system, and as a result, he often receives a completely different curriculum and different method of testing, rather than being taught the same curriculum as their peers. This separation in school often creates separation within other areas of life as well.

Integrated education

Integrated education is similar to inclusive education, but without any ideological commitment to equity. Integration places students in a mainstream classroom with some adaptations and resources. However, students are expected to fit in with pre-existing structures, attitudes and an unaltered environment. Integration is often mistaken for inclusion because students are placed in a mainstream classroom, which is a step towards inclusion. However, if there has not been a paradigm shift within the school and these students are not perceived as equals, if curriculum is

not taught for the understanding of all instead of some, then the students are integrated, but not included in the school.

Inclusive education

Inclusive education is a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners. It involves restructuring the culture, policies and practices in schools so that they can respond to the diversity of students. For a school to be inclusive, the attitudes of everyone in the school, including administrators, teachers, and other students, are positive towards students with disabilities. Inclusive education means that all children, regardless of their ability level, are included in a mainstream classroom, students of all ability levels are taught as equals, and teachers must adjust their curriculum and teaching methodologies so that all students are benefited. Studies have shown that systems that are truly inclusive reduce drop-out rates and repetition of grades, and have higher average levels of achievement, compared to systems that are not inclusive. People who believe in inclusive education believe that every child is capable of learning.

In fact the traditional medical model of disability views people with a disability as having a deficiency that needs to be “fixed.” Therefore, the person with a disability is the problem, and not the inaccessible society in which that person lives. People who view disability through the medical model judge the quality of life of a person with a disability before they are born, often believing that people with disabilities will lead less fulfilling lives, solely on the basis that their lives will be different than people without a disability. As a result, everything is done to help the person by trying to make them more ‘normal’, believing that this alone will lead to a better quality of life. The ideologies that the medical model is built upon are integral to the segregated model of education. Both see the person and their disability as the problem, and both seek to “fix” the disability, bringing the person as close to “normal” as possible.

In contrast, the social model of disability doesn’t find the deficiency within the person. Rather, the deficiencies are the limitations brought on by an inaccessible society. There are three main areas cited as areas where barriers for people with disabilities usually occur. These are the physical environment that a person lives in, so building design, the structures and rules of the society, and the services available; the attitudes of the community towards people with

disabilities; and the policies and procedures of organizations. The social model encourages the removal of these barriers within society, or the reduction of their effects, rather than trying to fix an individual's health condition.

Inclusive education is built around the goals and ideologies of the social model. Inclusion in education means removing the barriers in the classroom and school so that students of all ability levels are included in the same lesson. Equal access to education empowers people with disabilities to be independent and contributive, helpful members of an inclusive, barrier free society. Inclusion is not a static state like integration but it is a dynamic process that implies changes in school ethos to create a community that accepts and values differences (Bhattacharya, Tanmoy, 2010).

Inclusive School as Effective School

Effective schools are schools that produced learning outcomes for all students that are above typical expectations. Such schools do settle for average performance, but take action to ensure that their teaching and learning environments and programs are highly responsive to the needs of all learners, including those with disabilities as having sets of capabilities that need to be further developed and determine educational provision accordingly. Effective schools are also inclusive schools. An inclusive and effective school:

- (i) is driven by a moral imperative to improve the learning outcomes of all students regardless of their capacities and backgrounds;
- (ii) adopts a whole school focus that is reflected in the school's vision, beliefs, policies and practices;
- (iii) is deeply committed to the belief that all children can learn;
- (iv) recognizes that all students have special learning needs of one sort or another;
- (v) focuses on students' learning needs rather than on their learning disabilities;
- (vi) provides learning programs and task that are targeted to students' learning styles, interests and needs;
- (vii) is alert to uses a range of multi-skilled personnel (e.g. teachers, specialists, aides, clinicians, volunteers and other students) to assist students with their.

Broadly speaking, effective schools develop whole-school processes that promote inclusive education and quality teaching and classroom practices that are responsive to the individual needs and diverse learning styles of students.

Job satisfaction of Teachers

Job satisfaction involves liking for the work and acceptance of the pressures and aspirations connected with that work. Job satisfaction has been explained as a personalistic evaluation of conditions existing on the job (work, supervision) or outcomes that arise as a result of having a job (pay, security). It is the perception of internal responses (i.e. feelings).

All types of work are not inherently satisfying. People engaged in the work which is not satisfying in itself naturally look for satisfaction from sources external to it. Every profession has got certain aspects conducive for job satisfaction. At the same time it has other aspects that lead to dissatisfaction. Teaching profession is not an exception. If it is possible to isolate the factors of dissatisfaction, attempts can be made either to change the dissatisfying conditions or to reduce their intensity so as to increase the holding power of the profession. Unless the teacher is satisfied with his occupation, he cannot deliver (D Bhaskara Rao and Damera Sridhar,2003) .

In fact, satisfaction is an attitude which results from a balanced summation of many positive and negative experiences in connection with the job. It expresses the extent of match between employee's expectations of the job and rewards that the job provides. Students liking for teachers and teachers for students are positively related with the job satisfaction of teachers. In fact, job satisfaction is the result of various attitudes of an employee towards his job. These attitudes are related with specific factors such as salary, service conditions, advancement opportunities and other benefits (Dixit, M 1993).

There also exists some degree of positive relationship between the teaching attitude and teaching efficiency, thereby showing that superior efficiency goes with a favourable attitude and vice versa. Hence it is said that dissatisfied teachers would produce dissatisfied students. Naturally satisfaction of teacher with their jobs is very crucial.

The Relationship

Inclusive Education and Job Satisfaction of Teachers are closely related. For the success of Inclusive Education a motivated teacher is a must. He should be satisfied with his profession, his work. A dedicated teacher can only be an effective teacher, especially with respect to differently able students. So, when planning for a successful model of Inclusive Education one has to be careful and give due attention to the aspect of job satisfaction of a teacher.

Selection

Identifying and selecting an appropriate teacher is the first important task. When we plan for Inclusive Education, we should in mind that teachers should possess some essential traits. Teacher should be aware about the physiological concepts related to differently able children. So, Psychology and Sociology may be considered as a pre-condition for the teacher aspirants. This will ensure that a teacher with proper aptitude is coming into the Inclusive Education system and he is not dissatisfied with the work itself.

Training

A properly selected teacher also needs proper training to be able to an effective teacher in Inclusive Education system. Since, Inclusive Education includes both normal and differently able students, a teacher should be properly trained to take care of all categories of students. Teaching a differently able student requires special approach and skill. The training of teachers at pre-service and in-service levels should address the issue of education of children with disabilities, so that teachers are better equipped to work in an inclusive environment. Some of the issues in training that need to be addressed include the methodology to be adopted for identifying children with disabilities; classroom management; use of appropriate teaching methodologies; skills for adopting the curriculum; development of teaching-learning materials that are multi-sensory in nature and appropriate evaluation of learning.

Retention

Retaining a good teacher is a challenge. To retain a teacher, he must be satisfied within the system. Teaching - learning activity within the Inclusive Education framework is more demanding. A teacher should be motivated to be the part of the system. So, for retaining a

teacher in the system all his physiological and other needs should be satisfied. In fact, society should think about considering the teaching profession as more challenging and accordingly provide for more rewards, compared to any other profession.

Thus, there is a need to acknowledge the relationship between Inclusive Education and Job Satisfaction of Teachers. Teachers are the main drivers of Inclusive Schools. They should not only be aware about the concept, but also a committed lot. For commitment teachers pre-service and in-service training should be oriented towards the ideology and practices of Inclusive Education. They should be oriented in such a way that they are satisfied with the crucial role they play. Any successful model of Inclusive Education should take care of the requirements related to Job Satisfaction of Teachers.

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