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## THE CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS ENCOUNTERED BY EDUCATORS IN MANAGING STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES (SWIDS) IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SETTINGS

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**Abstract:** *The prime intention of the study is to discover and identify challenges confronted by teachers in handling students with Intellectual disabilities inclusive classrooms settings. Inclusive education is an approach to mark education a universal right to all irrespective of any disability within the learner and to sustain equity in the society. In modern days in the inclusive classroom settings lacks of well-qualified educators, good infrastructural facilities, curriculum strategies, assets and policies are creating hurdles for the innovative development of inclusive education in India. Inclusive education is considered as a comprehensive model that encounters all learners. Therefore, it is necessary to look into the challenges and difficulties the schools face in providing educational services to the SwIDs in the inclusive classroom settings. Inclusive education is a system of education for all; it is challenging teachers to manage SwIDs in their classrooms to work for progress of their learning. The paper also highlights the important role of teachers to face the challenges through new techniques and means to improve the teaching and learning in inclusive classroom settings. The important challenges faced by teachers in handling students with intellectual disabilities are lack of competent teachers, insufficient teaching learning resources, lack of proper infrastructural services, discrimination among students, lack of collaboration among parents and teachers, unclear inclusive education policies and attitudinal problems etc. Here the authors recommend some measures to overcome the challenges by improving facilities and resources and to revising the curriculum to be more flexible to provide the needs of SwID in an inclusive classroom setting.*

**Keywords:** *Inclusive Education, Intellectual Disability, Challenges, Inclusive Classroom*

### I INTRODUCTION

*"Children who learn together, learn to live together"*

Inclusive education, which speaks about importance of commitment to educate each child, to the extreme possible, in the school and classroom where he or she would sign in (Rogers, 1993).The important purpose of inclusive education is to build up a world where all children are welcome, and all children nurtures up in proper environment with constant support people. Inclusion education is firm with multicultural education, scoping to create a world in where many more

people to have opportunities to know, play and work together in inclusive settings (Barry, 1994).Inclusion education enhances into a learning procedure, which builds up a welcoming environment for all leaners. It finds that all children have individual needs, and that teachers who are competent to facilitate an inclusive classroom, can better meet the wishes of all children (Tomlinson, 1996).Inclusive education is enhance on the concept that all learners get quality education that encounters basic learning needs and restores their full potential. The important objective of inclusive education is to take away all forms of

discrimination, promote social solidity and foster countrywide fellowship to form an inclusive society. Inclusive education creates an enriching environment for the students with and without disabilities learns together in an inclusive classroom setting (Vaidya & Zaslavsky, 2000). Teachers must work strongly and systematically to reach its goals. Inclusion is interpreted in a wide sense, as a practice of increasing the access, involvement and welfares of all learners in the inclusive classroom settings.

Inclusive Education is an on-going process of learning and breaking down all the barriers and challenges to partaking and enhancing knowledge. ‘Barriers to learning’ denote about both internal and external to the learner that cause prevention to that person’s skill to progress from schooling (Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, 2002). Present-day inclusive education makes a learning environment that not only balances the rational abilities of all children but also their social and emotional development (Schwab, Gebhardt, Krammer & Klicpera, 2015). Inclusive education aims at make sure quality education, accommodating and concerning diversity, considering every individual, expressly disabled student to escape any indifference or discrimination. Inclusive education always an effort to work for development of exceptional services to students with intellectual disabilities in the inclusive classroom settings.

**Inclusive Classroom Setting**

*“If a child can’t learn the way we teach maybe we should teach the way they learn”*

*Ignacio Estrada*

Education is a foundation stone for every child, irrespective of variances, to be empowered with his or her vital knowledge and necessary skills so that he/she can be an independent and self-financing member of the society. The inclusive education approaches motivates educators to bring in extra resources and facilities into the classroom settings and instead of take away students from the classroom than making use of those services for better learning. Present days the educators working in inclusive schools were needed to take on challenges of meeting increasingly diverse needs of students in classroom. Educators are encouraged to modify their teaching strategies in order to satisfy various needs of SwID and fulfil the demanding role educators in modern society (Beloin and Peterson, 1998). Inclusive classroom practices necessarily involve the commitment of the entire team of multi-disciplinary community in the school.

Educators are very influential in what take place in classrooms and there are those who would argue that the development of more inclusive classrooms demands teachers to provide for diverse learner learning requirements through the modification or adaptation of the curriculum (Forlin, 2004). The inclusive education is dedicated with quality education. Quality education can be complete if the needs of

all learners are meeting so that each learner is providing with an opportunity to succeed (Pinnock H. & Lewis I., 2008). Inclusive education offers students with disabilities the opportunity to learning together with normal peers in the general education classroom, with the required unceasing supports from entire multi-disciplinary members who co-operate to plan for the student (Downing & Peckham-Hardin, 2007). Since there are lot of provisions are available in inclusive education by specific teaching strategies for children with disabilities to adapt a child centred approach to meet all needs of all learners including SwID in inclusive classroom setting.

**II TYPES OF CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY EDUCATORS IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SETTING**

“However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at.”

Stephen Hawking

In the modern times inclusive education faced with diversity of challenges in the classroom setting. The features of challenges are knowingly related to school administration with the accomplishment of inclusive education (Ali et al., 2006). The Challenges faced by educators at all stages in education, result on the fruitful education of children and the future of child with disabilities who must as equal participants of society. Inclusion has developed a very important phase, outlook, and feature of education through the globe (Sharma, 2015). Teachers have to build up an environment in the classroom which will enhance learning process and supported to take risks in life to contribute for development of an innovate society. The following are some of the important points speak about challenges faced by the educators in managing SwIDs in an inclusive education setting.

**Lack of Trained and Competent Educators**

Inclusive classroom settings are the most suitable when educators and service providers are “collaborative and consultative in curriculum framework” (Obiakor, Harris, Mutua, Rotatori, and Algozzine, 2012). Teacher competencies are a dominant feature of teaching and learning process in the classroom environment. Educators are considered as the key force in determining the quality education for SwID in inclusive settings. It is without any doubt that the educators can if provided appropriate support to manage inclusive classrooms (Swart and Pettipher, 2007). It is emphasise that the effective procedure of the programme be determined by on the high quality of professional preparation of teachers in all levels to equip them for and update their knowledge in handling children with diverse needs (Hay, Smit, and Paulsen, 2001). It also demands that educators among others be competent in communication skills and multidisciplinary work, some vital knowledge of

common disabilities, behaviour management, the effects of poverty and social deficiency and the skills to categorize all the above by means of assessment procedures (Winter, 2006). Therefore, one may conclude that the teachers' lack of competency in handling SwIDs in their inclusive classroom setting is a matter of fact as it makes them feel more anxious and less confident.

#### **Lack of Parental and Family Involvement**

Active family involvement has long been reflected to be an essential aspect associated with enhanced outcomes in the education of children with and without disabilities in inclusive early childhood programs (Berger, 1995; Levy, Kim, & Olive, 2006; Pérez Carreón, Drake, & Barton, 2005). Lifelong involvement of parents is key factor for the education of children of all ages, but it is challenging for the success of young children in inclusive classroom settings (Filler & Xu, 2006). Building up an appropriate environment and sustaining a culture of collaboration is a challenging for schools. Parents and families members need a better collaboration to convince that all students with disabilities need enhanced support and resources for their learning in the inclusive classroom settings. Many of the challenges faced by educators will affect in providing advanced quality of education to SwID in an inclusive classroom setting (Marx et al., 2014). Parental involvement is enhanced with child outcomes in primary and high schools which brings forth good academic skills, positive attitudes and social competence (Lau, Li & Rao, and 2011). There is research evidence to show that many parents experience rejection on the part of schools and related service providers to share information and include parents in decision-making about educational facilities for their children (Runswick-Cole, 2008). Parents and Family members must afford their full cooperation in the implementation of inclusive education. Parental and family support is very essential for building up a social integration among students in the classrooms.

#### **Inappropriate Teaching-Learning Methods and Resources**

An inclusive education can only take place when our normal schools become more inclusive in nature. In other words, if they able to offer better education to all children including children with disabilities in the schools (UNESCO, 2009). The teaching and learning methods need a real resource fitting for teaching and learning. Educators usually come across lack of human resources, teaching and learning facilities; this poses great challenges to face successful inclusion (Crawford, 2004). The advance teaching and learning approaches used by educators play a vital role in development of an inclusive classrooms setting. However, an inappropriate and inflexible program that does not permit for diverse changes can lead to a learning failure (Motitswe 2012). The unsuitable and inflexible nature of the

program does not allow encountering learners' diverse needs. The preparation of improved materials must be included in the inclusive program for all learners to update their knowledge (Zimba 2011). It was acknowledged by the educators that the education of SwIDs is challenging, but we should not overlook in to that because they are also part of our society. The practise of natural methods will be more convenient and effective for SwIDs in inclusive classrooms. These children with disabilities should also have access to equal opportunities to learn in regular schools with other children and be allowed to quality education and services in inclusive classroom. It is also advisable that schools should take initiates in preparation of quality inclusive teaching materials and with aids and teaching-learning resources should supply to all learn.

#### **Lack of Proper Infrastructural Facilities**

School infrastructure is a key base for better teaching and learning in schools. Education does not take place in a vacuity but in an environment planned of physical facilities and physical assets that are utilised in teaching and learning. Researches have proven those well-equipped school environments are considered as a safe learning for academic achievement (Cash, 1993, Earthman & Lemaster 1996). In the current days most of educational institutions are facing challenges in create a conducive learning environment to ensure the comfort of learning at school. In order providing children with disabilities to feel relaxed, safe and skilful learning, it is essential to create favourable environment so that they would have same access to education like other normal students (Goldsmith & Goldsmith, 1998). Students with disabilities are also able to achieve the education to a higher level if they provide the appropriate space and services (Lane et al., 1993). The physical environment of a school is a main pivotal factor in the achievement of its objectives (Asiabaka 2008). Many researchers have also designated that effective management of system as well as schools can improve the quality of educational services that in turn, affects the access and involvement of children (Govinda & Bandyopadhyay, 2011c, Bandyopadhyay & Dey, 2011 Dayaram, 2011, Dayaram, 2013). Therefore, the specific infrastructure such as barrier-free facilities like; comfortable classrooms, wheelchair accesses, ramps and railings, accessible toilets, playground, safe and sufficient drinking water facility, library and labs should be consider for enhancement of teaching and learning for SwID in an inclusive classroom settings.

#### **Unclear Inclusive Education Policies**

Over the past several decades, inclusive education approaches have been utilized for the education of students with disabilities (Biklen, 1992). The policy makers at centre are less concerned with the local settings and less aware of the practical and political difficulties at the local level, which

originates from such policies (NP-NSPE, 1995). There is an important gap between the ways in which the Inclusive Education policy is executed in the schools and the role is expected by the policy makers of the Inclusive Education policy (DoE, 2010). Inclusive Education policy into practice so that the quality of education for all learners can be advanced (Farrel, 2010). The policies require the implementation of Inclusive Education system through educational policies with effectiveness, competence and equity being measured as sustaining aspects in certifying quality education to learners (Watkins & Ebersold, 2016). The Inclusive Education policy affects all those involved in education to some extent and it therefore requires the attention of everybody within the Department of Education. Inclusive education is thus a systematic change at all levels; principals, teachers, learners, school communities, policy makers, decision makers, families, and society.

An Inclusive Education system is applied as an attempt to attain perception in education (Poernomo, 2016). In the recent years educators come across broad level of challenges in implementing, the inclusive education services for SwIDs in inclusive classroom settings. It is due to unawareness regarding inclusive education policy planning and implementation. The challenges to inclusive education can be decreased through active teamwork between policy-makers, educators, paraprofessional and other stakeholders, including the full participation of members of the local community, such as political and religious leaders, local education officials and the media. Inclusion secures all aspects of school life, and is reinforced by culture, policies and every day practices of lives of the society.

#### **Attitudinal Barriers Experienced by SwIDs**

A barrier is something that blocks equivalent access to noble services, or information of a person or group of people. Attitudinal barriers create a disabling environment across all domains. (WHO & World Bank, 2011). Attitudes held towards SwID can have wide-ranging effects on the individual and may impact upon opportunities for employment, housing, health and education (Siperstein et al., 2003). The identification of attitudes towards those SwID is important to identify potential objectivity and develop a model that can be used to improve relationships (McManus et al., 2011). Most of SwID feel excluded by normal peers and are rarely chosen as friends (Roberts & Zubrick 1992; Sale & Carey 1995). Research about attitudes to people with disabilities proves that many people hold negative attitudes and that these attitudes are challenges to the impartiality of people with disabilities (Deal 2007). People with disabilities often classify societal attitudes as the most powerful and negative pressure in their lives..." (Vole, 1993). Knowing that persons with disabilities are still open to and concerned by impartiality and perception may be the first step in

reducing preference (Genesi 2007 citing Marks, 1997). Attitude to disability are important barriers to disabled people's full involvement in the society.

Negative attitudes may result in low approval by peers, few friendships, and loneliness and even being rejected and/or oppressed. This may lead to deep effects on the lives of young students with disabilities, causing in problems in involving group activities, sinking in academic performance, dropping out of school and/or problem behaviour (Jackson & Bracken, 1998; Ollendick, Weist, Borden, & Greene, 1992). "Attitudes to disability are the major challenges to disabled peoples' full participation... From disappointment, discomfort and fear, to low expectations about what disabled people can contribute, stereotypical and negative attitudes hold people back" (Massie, 2006). It is evident that children without disabilities show more negative attitudes towards peers with intellectual disabilities than peers with other disabilities in the inclusive classrooms (Lewis 1995; Kendall 2000; Georgiadi 2002). Attitudinal barriers, which result in discomfort and discrimination, reject people with disabilities their dignity and potential and are one of the greatest hurdles to attaining equality of opportunity and social inclusion (Wapling & Downie, 2012). Encouraging positive attitudes and respect for alteration is an essential for policy enhancement and execution of inclusive education in school and community.

#### **Overcoming Challenges Enacted in Inclusive Classroom Setting**

- Flexible teaching and learning methods adapted for educating SwIDs.
- Parental involvement in inclusive classroom will influence and support their children's academic achievement.
- Appropriate teaching methods with innovative techniques to teaching aids, and equipment with the use of ICTs.
- Creating barrier-free and child-friendly environments in the classrooms.
- Creating an accessible and well-equipped infrastructural environment in promoting inclusive education for all.
- Promoting positive attitudes and respect for differences will give way to comfort, reverence and friendship.
- Reducing exclusion, discrimination, barriers to learning and participation.

### **III CONCLUSION**

The world is looking towards a progress in inclusive education as a basic right for every individual but then there are many barriers without take away those we cannot even change further. The key purpose of this study was to discuss

about the effective means to overshadow the challenges and barriers faced by teachers in handling children with intellectual disabilities in inclusive classrooms setting. The application of inclusive education framework depends on several reasons. It includes changes in attitudes, policies and infrastructure. Teachers themselves are an essential component to ensure the quality of students' inclusion in the school environment. Through overpowering the challenges and barriers faced by teachers in inclusive education includes a recollecting and reorganizing of education system into new innovative methods and technologies for diversity in all forms of teaching and learning in an inclusive classroom setting. The outcomes of the study displays that schools should be innovative through reforming the policies and technologies involved in the education of SwIDs in an inclusive classroom setting.

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