

District Wise Challenges and the Remedies of Disability Students in Kerala

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Abstract

Inclusive Education in Kerala is taken as inclusion of the diffabled children in the regular schools. In fact, it is the non-rejection or non-segregation or exclusion of learners for whatever reason – ability, gender, language, care status, family income, disability, sexuality, colour, religion or ethnic origin. This study is an explorative report developed to understand the challenges faced by inclusive education.

Key Words : Inclusive Education, Disability, Kerala, Remedies

Introduction

Inclusive Education in Kerala is taken as inclusion of the diffabled children in the regular schools. In fact, it is the non-rejection or non-segregation or exclusion of learners for whatever reason – ability, gender, language, care status, family income, disability, sexuality, colour, religion or ethnic origin. It contrasts from recently held ideas of 'incorporation' and 'mainstreaming', which would, in general, be concerned chiefly with handicap and 'exceptional instructive needs' and suggested students changing or turning out to be 'prepared for' settlement by the standard. By contrast, inclusion is about the *child's right to participate* and the *school's duty to accept* and perhaps *the whole society's responsibility to accommodate*.

The educational inclusion is –

- Enhancing learners participation in schools of their choice irrespective of the reason mentioned above;
- Making learning more meaningful and relevant for all, particularly those learners most vulnerable to exclusionary pressures;

- Rethinking and restructuring policies, curricula, cultures and practices in schools and learning environments so that diverse learning needs can be met, whatever the origin or nature of those needs.

Inclusion, as a way of integrating diffabled children who were called “children with special needs” into regular schools, gained impetus in India in the 1970s.

The Scheme of IEDC aims to provide educational opportunities for the diffabled children in common (regular) schools, to encourage their maintenance in the educational system and furthermore to put in like manner (customary) schools such kids previously set in unique schools after they gain the correspondence and everyday living aptitudes at the utilitarian level. The increased awareness and need to educate diffabled children has been reflected in the National Policy on Education- NPE (1986) and the subsequent Plan of Action- POA (1992), which clearly advocated the approach of providing integrated education for the mild (educable) and moderate (trainable) diffabled children and of special education for the severe and profound diffabled children. The consideration of a segment on Education of the Disabled in the NPE and POA prompted a progression of tests on coordinated instruction in India, some undeniable like The Project Integrated Education for the Disabled (PIED) and the others as a piece of the leader programs intending to accomplish Universalization of Elementary Education like The District Primary Education Program and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. All these programmes have emphasized the need to place diffabled children (CWSN) in regular schools, giving due importance to evolving a broad spectrum of educational models for them . The programme for Secondary Education called the *Scheme for Universalisation of Access for Secondary Education(SUCCESS)* or *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)* which is being implemented in our Country also has provisions for these children. The RTE Act proposes free and mandatory instruction to all kids matured somewhere in the range of 6 and 14 years, making it official on all open and non-public schools to save 25% of their seats for kids from "disadvantaged sections" .

However it is not the learners but the schools have to change its educational system to accommodate all categories of learners and make them learn in the way they can learn. This implies the schools need to change its institutional courses of action which urge to follow dynamic instructional methods doable for all arrangements of students. Making hindrance free conditions in the school to empower each student to take an interest in the learning procedures of the school is the need now. In the context of RTE also it is high time to rethink on how to achieve total inclusion in our educational system.

Wayanad

Challenges faced by Wayanad district in connection with the education of differently-abled children

Educational Situation The available statistics show that the number of children and persons facing physical and intellectual challenges is increasing over the years. Hence the growth and development of this group deserve special importance. In Wayanad, 3% of the total student population in general schools belongs to this category out of which 1% faces intellectual challenges. Those who face learning difficulties are usually ignored at school. There exists

nonavailability of clinical psychologists and psychiatrists for setting up of medical boards leading to problems related to the issue of certificates. ·Parents having economic backwardness do not send their wards to school regularly. They face problems of conveyance. ·Due to ignorance and misconception most of the parents feel incompetent to identify the deficiencies in the early childhood days. ·There exists a shortage of equipment for the survival of mental and physical limitation among differently-abled. ·Due to lack of awareness among all those related to school causes a denial of enrolment. The ·The curriculum doesn't accommodate activities and evaluation process exclusively for differently-abled. ·Lack of resource room and facilities for therapy and other services like adaptive toilet, ramp, rail etc. Teacher training programmes do not provide deserving importance to adapted activities.

The General Education Department in the State of Kerala wishes to organize the education of differently-abled children at the same level and manner in all the districts. Supporting systems are arranged with this assumption. But it is quite important to identify how the specific features of each district influence the activities. This kind of evaluation is essential to make the planning process most effective. The content of this chapter is the explorative reports developed with regard to the challenges faced by inclusive education.

Alappuzha

Even though there are eligible students, the service of a clinical psychologist is not available in the district for issuing the certificates. In the absence of medical board certificates the service of Resource Teachers, financial benefits and concessions on examination are not made available. Schools with IEDSS Resources Teachers don't have a convenient resource room. Resource rooms are not even equipped with learning materials for them. Most of the resource rooms and therapy centres are not functioning properly. As these are not sufficient vocational centres, students completing school education keep themselves at home. Some of them depend on the vocational training centre in Thiruvananthapuram. Students with medical reference cards do not get medical certificates accordingly. Shortage of vocational training centres makes it inconvenient to rehabilitate the students after their SSLC and +2 studies. Hence, parents face difficulties in helping their wards to become self-sufficient by locating vocations. Ramp and rail and adapted toilets are arranged in certain schools, but not available in all the schools. There is a great need for arranging resource rooms and resource centres in schools. Even though Resource Teachers are working under SSA and DIET, their service is not reaching schools with less than five belonging to this category.

Kasaragod

Challenges related to learning and rehabilitation activities

Shortage of vocational training centres makes it inconvenient to rehabilitate the students after their SSLC and +2 studies. Hence, parents face difficulties in helping their wards to become self-sufficient by locating vocations. Ramp and rail and adapted toilets are arranged in certain schools, but not available in all the schools. There is a great need for arranging resource rooms and resource centres in schools.

Nonavailability of Resource Teachers

Even though Resource Teachers are working under SSA and DIET, their service is not reaching schools with less than five belonging to this category.

Adaptation

Adaptation activities going on in the class are not full and perfect. Resource teachers and other subject teachers need to be trained for better results

Parental Unawareness

Parents need better awareness with regard to education, special concessions and service of children with special needs. In spite of the existing awareness campaign, parents are not in a position to ensure proper support to these children.

Challenges in the districts Kottayam

1. Non-availability of medical board certificates. ·
2. Since the teachers are posted in two schools, students do not get full-time attention. ·
3. Lack of teacher grant. ·
4. CWSN do not get their grant regularly. ·
5. Weak teacher training affects the learning of students. ·
6. Weak facilities for vocational training. ·
7. Shortage of resource rooms and resource centres.

Thiruvananthapuram

Due to the excessive intervention of special schools in the educational process, there occurred a decrease in the number of CWSN in general schools. As they join special schools, they don't get the experiences of general schools. Hence parents need to be supported with the awareness that life skills are developed among their wards as they are taught in general school atmosphere.

Lack of Vocational Training

Students completing +2 classes confront the very question “what next”? Usually, they don't get proper vocational training. It is possible to address this issue by opening a vocational training centre under each cluster.

Lack of special curriculum for CWSN

It feels difficult to coordinate the learning activities and to develop learning materials exclusively for CWSN. Teacher grants may be made rich each school can undertake the responsibility of developing TLM. The situation of multiple disabilities makes the children incapable of learning the situation of multiple disabilities makes the children incapable of learning.

Shortage of basic facilities

The most important challenge faced by school authorities of general schools is the shortage of ramp, rail, adapted toilets and 'Aya'. These basic facilities are to be made rich with the help of projects like SSA and RMSA.

Lack of proper awareness

Content-based awareness is quite needed to practise teachers, peer group, Aya and parents of CWSN. For parents, activity-based awareness is to be imported. Lack of a Resource Centre is another important problem. Parents who have to travel to distant places are not in a position to afford the expenses. Hence more resource centres are to be set up for the purpose.

Problems related to Medical board certificate

Medical based certificates are not received on a time-bound basis. Hence scholarships and examination concessions are also not allotted to the deserving students and hence the challenge. All schools with CWSN need the service of a Resource Teacher.

Palakkad

Inclusive education – Challenges in district

Lack of clear directions related to +1 admission. It is a matter of concern as it fails to arrange a permanent system to make the students and parents aware about the directions and related activities for the conduct of counselling for +1 admission for the last many years. Selection of two centres for the counselling creates inconvenience to parents and students coming from various parts of the district. Problems in getting medical board certificates. Parents get troubled as they meet difficulty in getting medical board certificates. It is quite difficult for the students from various parts of the district to receive the certificate from Trichur Medical College. It is essential to ensure the full time service of the resource teachers for the effective implementation of the supporting system for differently-abled children. Disregard against students facing cerebral palsy and challenges in moving. The criteria for the service of resource teachers are decided by the students belonging to this category in general schools. Students who seek help even for their primary needs have to be considered with due priority. Since cerebral palsy category perhaps includes both intellectual and physical challenges, they are not to be disregarded.

Differently-abled children get dropped out from the area of inclusive education. This issue basically does not agree with the present concept of empowering the educational process. It is quite pitiful to create circumstances to keep away the students of this kind. Moreover, it provides chances to categorise schools without any scientific criteria. Lack of unity and coordination among students and parents. At present, there are no platforms for the coordination of parents, teachers and students in the district. This leads to the denial of opportunities for ensuring confidence among them. Absence of rehabilitation centres, rehabilitation centres are not available in the district for acquiring life skills, vocational training and also for protecting the children. Hence, the children keep themselves at home without attaining placement in any field

even after their education. This situation evidently shrivels up the skills already acquired by them.

Suggestions : -

1. It is desirable to conduct counselling prior to +1 admission and to implement facilities for timely communication in this connection.
2. It will be good if the service of a clinical psychologist is made available at taluk hospitals. Include CP and OH categories as the criteria, while appointing Resource Teachers.
3. Promote educational systems suited for developing various social skills.

Conclusion

The study concludes the field realities in a peripheral outlooks. But in depth study can be conducted by the authorities in all over the districts in Kerala that may be helpful for implementing fruitful interventions as a support to teachers,parents and ultimately each individual student to overcome the hurdles to make their effort to better life and career.