

Skills and Competencies of teachers and teacher educators for secondary education in inclusive settings

It can be very difficult for mainstream teacher to teach student with disabilities within inclusion classrooms because both disabled and non-disabled students learn together in same classrooms. Skills and competencies are required by mainstream teachers in order to serve students with disabilities in inclusive setting. Competency were include professional knowledge, teaching techniques, classroom management, collaboration, assessment and evaluation, adaptive instruction, and support system. An ability to plan, control and facilitate interaction in the classroom need to be fulfilled by mainstream teacher for the successful inclusion in school. It is important to provide teachers with the knowledge, skills and understanding of inclusive so they can play an effective role in school (Sharma, Simi & Forlin, 2015).

Skills and Competencies:

1. Evaluation and Monitoring

- Ability to solve problem
- Ability to assess student learning skills
- Ability to value all kinds of prior skills of students
- Ability to developing alternative assessments
- Ability to assess individual needs of student
- Ability to set appropriate, realistic and measurable goals for the student
- Ability to evaluate each student's level of functioning
- Ability to evaluate student progress.
- Ability to know the rights of special needs children
- Ability to determine the role of parents and community and NGOs in education of student with disabilities.

2. Teaching strategies

- Ability to modify assignments for students
- Ability to design learning activities for all students
- Ability to use a variety of instructional strategies effectively
- Ability to adapt materials in lessons
- Ability to provide the best teaching approach.
- Ability to help others in using different methods of adopting teaching methods for successful inclusion
- Ability to adapt curriculum content to be suited with the needs of student in the class
- Ability to procure relevant special educational material from special teacher/educator/support group
- Ability to design variety of alternative teaching strategies to compensate the deficient area of the student with disabilities

3. Class Management

- Ability to plan appropriate classroom physical environment
- Ability to accommodate and adjust learning environment
- Ability to counsel special needs students in the classroom
- Ability to provide the conducive classroom environment
- Ability to rearrange classroom sitting position
- Ability to set up comfortable environment

4. Teaching aids

- Ability to use proper teaching aids to make learning simple, interesting and active.
- Ability to develop and to use variety of teaching aids.
- Ability to develop innovative teaching aids.

5. Curriculum transaction

- Student- Teacher, Student- Student, Student- Surrounding, Student- Learning materials interactions should be there.
- Student- Teacher interaction should be respectful, appreciative & encouraging, disciplined, approachable and comprehensive.
- Ability to use various methods, models of teaching, skills of teaching in class room interaction.
- Ability to motivate and guide in student- student interaction.

To make inclusion as a placement for students with various disabilities carried out successfully, teacher will have to change the paradigm on inclusive education in order to meet the needs of the student. The teachers must be well equipped with the knowledge of various disabilities, assessment of student, managing classroom in and propose an effective approach in teaching strategies. They need program for skills development to manage classroom and meet the needs of special children. Successful inclusive education require mainstream teacher working together with colleagues to meets student needs formally and informally.

National Curriculum Framework- 2005

A policy of inclusion needs to be implemented in all schools and throughout Indian education system. The participation of all children needs to be ensured in all spheres of their life in and outside the school. Schools need to become centers that prepare children for life and ensure that all children, especially the differently abled children from marginalized sections, and children in difficult circumstances get the maximum benefit of this critical area of education. Opportunities to display talents and share these with peers are powerful tools in nurturing motivation and involvement among children. In our schools we tend to select some children over and over again. While this small group benefits from these opportunities, becoming more self-confident and visible in the school, other children experience repeated disappointment and progress through school with a constant longing for recognition and peer approval. Excellence and ability may be singled out for appreciation, but at the same time opportunities need to be given to all children and their specific abilities need to be recognized and appreciated. This includes children with disabilities, who may need assistance or more time to complete their assigned tasks. It would be even better if, while planning for such activities, the teacher discusses them with all the children in the class, and ensures that each child is given an opportunity to contribute. When planning, therefore, teachers must pay special attention to ensuring the participation of all. This would become a marker of their effectiveness as teachers. Excessive emphasis on competitiveness and individual achievement is beginning to mark many of our schools, especially private schools catering to the urban middle classes. Very often, as soon as children join, houses are allocated to them. Thereafter, almost every activity in the school is counted for marks that go into house points, adding up to an end-of-the-year prize. Such 'house loyalties' seem to have the superficial effect of getting all children involved and excited about winning points for their houses, but also distorts educational aims, where excessive competitiveness promotes doing better than someone else as an aim, rather than excelling on one's own terms and for the satisfaction of doing something well. Often placed under the monitoring eye of other children, this system distorts social relations within schools, adversely affecting peer relations and undermining values such as cooperation and sensitivity to others. Teachers need to reflect on the extent to which they want the spirit of competition to enter into and permeate every aspect of school life performing more of a function in regulating and disciplining than in nurturing learning and interest. Schools also undermine the diverse capabilities and talents of children by categorizing them very early, on

narrow cognitive criteria. Instead of relating to each child as an individual, early in their lives children are placed on cognitive berths in the classroom: the 'stars', the average, the below - average and the 'failures'. Most often they never have a chance to get off their berth by themselves. The demonizing effect of such labeling is devastating on children. Schools go to absurd lengths to make children internalise these labels, through verbal name calling such as 'dullard', segregating them in seating arrangements, and even creating markers that visually divide children into achievers and those who are unable to perform. The fear of not having the right answer keeps many children silent in the classroom, thus denying them an equal opportunity to participate and learn. Equally paralyzed by the fear of failure are the so called achievers, who lose their capacity to try out new things arising from the fear of failure, doing less well in examinations, and of losing their ranks. It is important to allow making errors and mistakes to remain an integral part of the learning process and remove the fear of not achieving 'full marks'. The school needs to send out a strong signal to the community, parents who pressurize children from an early age to be perfectionists. Instead of spending time in tuitions or at home learning the 'perfect answers', parents need to encourage their children to spend their time reading storybooks, playing and doing a reasonable amount of homework and revision. Instead of looking for courses on stress management for their pupils, school heads and school managements need to de-stress their curricula, and advise parents to de-stress children's life outside the school. Schools that emphasise intense competitiveness must not be treated as examples by others, including state-run schools. The ideal of common schooling advocated by the Kothari Commission four decades ago continues to be valid as it reflects the values enshrined in our Constitution. Schools will succeed in inculcating these values only if they create an ethos in which every child feels happy and relaxed. This ideal is even more relevant now because education has become a fundamental right, which implies that millions of first-generation learners are being enrolled in schools. To retain them, the system — including its private sector — must recognize that there are many children that no single norm of capacity, personality or aspiration can serve in the emerging scenario. School administrators and teachers should also realize that when boys and girls from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and different levels of ability study together, the classroom ethos is enriched and becomes more inspiring. A child has special educational needs if s/he has difficulty in learning. This may require special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child may have learning

difficulty because of a disability which hinders her/his from making use of the existing educational facilities provided for all other children of her class. A child may have learning difficulty because of some other reasons too.

Key points:

- Disability is a social responsibility.
- Failure of a child is an indication of the failure of school.
- No selection procedure to be adopted for denying admission to learner with disabilities.
- Accept difference and elaborate diversity.
- Inclusive is not confined to the disabled, it also means non-existence.
- Learn human rights and conquer human wrong.
- Handicap is a social construct, deconstruct handicap.
- Make provisions and not restrictions; adjust to the need of the child.
- Remove social, physical and attitudinal barriers.
- Partnership is our strength such as: school - community, school - teacher, teacher – children, children – children, teacher – parents, school system – out side system.
- Learning together is beneficial for every child.
- Support services are essential services.
- What to is to be learned from the child identifying his/ her strength not limitations.
- Inculcate mutual respect and inter-dependence.

Curriculum for teacher preparation and transactional mode in inclusive settings

When preparing teachers to support an inclusive education system three areas must be considered: the attitudes of teachers and education staff, pre-service training programs to help ensure that future generations of teachers enter the profession with the skills and knowledge to work in an inclusive environment, and in-service training to improve the capacity of teachers already working in the field.

1. Attitudinal Changes and Awareness Raising

For inclusive education to succeed, it is vitally important that teachers, principals and other education stakeholders maintain a positive attitude towards inclusion. They must be firmly convinced of the benefits that inclusive practices bring to all children. Even if inclusive education is mandated by law, it will never succeed without the enthusiastic support of its practitioners. Obtaining such support involves behavior and attitudinal change which is not a quick or easy process. There are a number of ways to accomplish such change.

- Organize training workshops for educators and key community members on general inclusive education techniques, especially those which highlight how such techniques can benefit all children by improving overall quality of teaching.
- Integrate awareness about inclusive education into schools' regular professional development activities.
- Integrate knowledge about the benefits of inclusive education into initial training programs for student teachers in colleges and universities.
- Develop mass media activities and materials that emphasize the value of inclusive education.
- Increase awareness of the many benefits of inclusive education through the interaction of educators and key community members with people with disabilities.

2. Pre-Service Training Programs

This includes training at teacher training colleges and universities at both the national and provincial levels. Ideally, inclusive education should be a compulsory subject for all teacher

candidates and an integral part of teacher training curricula. Fundamental knowledge and skills of inclusive education, such as understanding needs and abilities of children with special needs and pedagogic skills such as instructional accommodation and activity differentiation, should be provided widely to teacher candidates. As a long term goal, countries should work towards promoting inclusive education as a compulsory subject in pre-service training programs.

3. In-Service Training Programs

In-service training programs offer a particularly effective strategy to improve the quality of an entire educational system for all children regardless of their needs. Inclusive education methods are child-centered, employing active and participative learning techniques that improve teachers' capacity to teach children both with and without disabilities. Collaborative and participative techniques not only enhance learning outcomes, but also reduce prejudice and discrimination among children. Regardless of whether countries have adopted inclusive education as a national mandate or are still in the pilot stages, this type of training will have a positive impact on all teachers and children in participating schools.

Teaching strategies:

1. Co-operative learning
2. Peer tutor
3. Multisensory teaching

Class room adaptation:

- Class room size
- Teaching aids
- Arrangement of light
- Attention to physical needs
- Seating arrangement
- Position of teacher in the class
- Student teacher ratio.

Role of Teacher in Inclusive Education

1. Identification of the children with disabilities in the classroom.
2. Referring the identified to the experts for further examination and treatment.
3. Accepting the children with disabilities.
4. Developing positive attitude between normal and disabled children.
5. Placing the children in the classroom in proper places so that they feel comfortable and are benefited by the classroom interaction.
6. Removing architectural barriers wherever possible so that children with disabilities move independently.
7. Involving the children with disabilities in almost all the activities of the classroom.
8. Making suitable adaptation in the curriculum transaction so that the children with disabilities learn according to their ability.
9. Preparations of teaching aids/adaptation of teaching aids which will help the children with disabilities learn.
10. Parental guidance and counselling and public awareness programme through school activities.
11. Collaborating with medical and physiological pannals, social works, parents and special teachers.
12. Construction of achievement and diagnostic tool.
13. Adaptation in evaluation for children with special needs.
14. Providing remedial instruction to the children who require it.

Teacher's ethical principles

The aim of teachers' ethical principles is to draw attention to the ethics involved in teaching.

Good professional ethics are among a teacher's most important resources.

- **Teachers and relationship with work**

Teachers commit to the standards and ethics of their work. Teachers manage their duties responsibly. Teachers develop their work and expertise and assess their own actions.

Teachers teach in a manner that reflects their personality, so developing and caring for their individuality is their right and obligation.

Teachers are entitled to be treated fairly in their work.

- **Teachers and learners**

Teachers accept and treat learners as unique human beings. Teachers respect the rights of learners and react to them humanely and fairly.

Teachers try to understand the learners' starting point, thoughts and opinions. Teachers considerately handle matters linked to the learner's personality and privacy. Teachers pay special attention to learners who require care and protection and do not, under any circumstances, tolerate bullying or the abuse of other people.

Teachers' work also includes teaching learners to co-operate and to become good members of society. Building up confidence and good relationships is part of teachers' work.

- **Teachers and the work community**

Teachers value their work and respect their colleagues. Teachers try to pool their resources and find a balance between their autonomy and the work community.

Accepting the individuality of colleagues, understanding them and helping and supporting each other are key principles of the work community.

- **Teachers and society**

Teaching is one of the most important jobs in society. Teachers' ability to be effective in their work and take care of their professional development are dependent not only on their commitment, but also on the resources allocated to teaching and education. Teachers promote the opportunities offered by education and growth.

Teachers represent, above all, learners' rights and interests – even critically, if necessary. In their work, they also teach learners to become responsible members of a democratic society.

- **Teachers and stakeholders**

Teachers work together with learners' parents, guardians and other parties responsible for education, training and well-being. These include social and health care expert groups, authorities and numerous other collaborating parties.

The co-operation supports learners' learning and development.

- **Teachers and plurality**

Teachers need to ensure that all learners have the same rights and obligations as members of society.

They make sure that learners and their parents' cultures and world views are respected equally and that no one is discriminated against based on them.