

Education Of Children With Special Needs: Barriers And Opportunities With Special Reference To Assam

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Citation: Debojit Borah (2024), Education Of Children With Special Needs: Barriers And Opportunities With Special Reference To Assam, *Educational Administration: Theory And Practice*, 30(5), 13383 - 13388
Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i5.5759

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

This research paper mainly discusses the problems linked to the curricula, provisions and practices relating to “children with special needs”. The main inclusion premise is obtaining the diversity of learners. The styles of inclusive identify the styles of learning of every learner to educate values of diversity, develop social capital and foster approaches of collaborative. Education of inclusive defines the setting of education where all children can receive similar types of experiences in education irrespective of any differences. It also includes the common learning process of teaching. At the level of elementary, SSA is the main agency assigned with the implementation responsibility of inclusive education. This study aims to review the SSA provisions regarding the references of Assam at the level of elementary. The objective of this study is to know the inclusive education status as well as the SSA role reference to Assam. In this study, qualitative data analysis and a deductive approach have been used to gather the study data. The role of inclusive education and SSA is comparatively important to educate “children with special needs”.

Keywords: Inclusion, SSA, Elementary Education. Inclusive Education, Disability, Special Needs

Introduction

Education is the strongest tool of change in society and that helps to begin upward movement within the community structure. Education assists in bridging the gap in the middle of the various class of society. In the year 1944, “CABE or the Central Advisory Board of Education” instituted a structural report named “*the Sergeant Report*” based on the development of education in India. This report also specified the education for special needs children, and this was an essential part of the education system. “*The Kothari Commission*” was set up in the year 1964-1966, the first commission of education in India. This commission stated that the education of special need children have to be a significant part of the country’s education system. Education of children with special requirements, known as inclusive education, depends on the principles of educational, social and ethical. The main objective of this paper is to know the programmes and policies for application of the inclusive education in Assam. “*SSA or Samagra Siksha Assam*” has been initiated to circumscribe disabled children. In order to accomplish this “*Right to Education Act 2009*”, effected from April 1st, 2010, the Assam Government has commenced different strategies for giving them proper growth in mainstream education [6]. These strategies aim to give quality education to special needs children who are 14 years in schools along with an environment of inclusion. SSA mainly concentrates on enhanced access to retention, education and enrollment of children in the premises of the school and trying to improve “*the quality of education*”.

Literature Review

Inclusive Education- in National Context

All over India learner with special need is identified differently in various documents, such as children with special need in the “*District Primary Education Programme*”. Though the report stated by the “*NCERT - UNESCO*” workshop defined the assessment required for the education of inclusive [1]. The past terms

mainly indicate that education with special children takes place in specially built schools which are different from other schools. In different countries present day a large number of children with disability are educated in schools under “*the regular system*”. In the year 1970, the Indian Government established the centrally financed scheme of “*IEDC or Integrated Education for Disabled Children*”. This scheme mainly aims to give opportunities for education to children with special needs in regular institutions that help to generate their retention and achievement [2]. In the meantime, the “*NCERT or National Council of Educational Research and Training*” went along with UNICEF and initiated a project of Integrated Education to help disabled children in 1987. The scheme of IEDC gives a broader range of interventions and incentives in the context of education for disabled children [4]. These comprise parent counselling, preschool training, uniforms, readers, hostel facilities, allowances for stationary, and books.

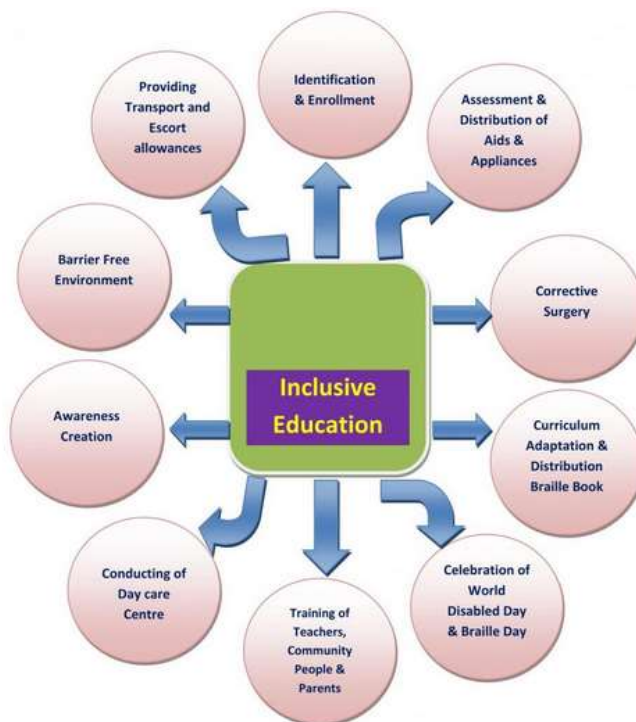


Figure 1: Inclusive Education

(Source: [6])

There are different models of disability, such as “*the human rights model*”. The model of human rights states that position disability is an essential dimension of the culture of humans. It also stated that all humans are born along with some rights that are inalienable. This model tends to go forward on individuals compared to the social model by retaining the environmental causation concept [3]. “*The National Institutes of Open Schooling*” promotes courses that provide benefits to children with disabilities in their progress at their own pace. Other different programmes that help disabled children give quality education are rehabilitation of community-based and alternative schooling programmes.

Changing Role in the Context of Special Schools

“*Special schools*” have been established in previous times, and provisions also have been developed for the implementation of integrated education. In the year 1947, India had 32 institutions for “*the blind*”, 3 for the “*mentally retarded*”, and 30 for “*the deaf*”. Whereas by the year 2000, the number of special schools increased to 3000 all total. Special institutions for children with locomotor, hearing, and visual impairment are stated to follow a guideline that is typically the same as the curriculum of the general school. The instructional methodologies adaptation and plus the curriculum are also taken into action where it is necessary. Children suffering from mental needs some special guidelines and curriculum to encounter their proper needs of education. Over time there has been some increasing awareness of the special institutions and special education in the country. In the year 1992, there has been a programme launched, namely the Action Programme, which suggested principle of pragmatic placement and integrated education should go hand in hand [4]. It stated that disabled children have to be shifted to general institutions at the time they are prepared to counter the shift. Leadership holds different behaviours as per the different circumstances within the environment of education.



Figure 2: Importance and need of Inclusive Education

(Source: [9])

Administrators play different roles in their position, multiple roles are leading instruction, planning, directing, supervising, and managing everyday activities. It is important to generate leads on the premises of special institutions that assist in employing better programs to help disabled children study in comfort. The administrator of special education should be more active in the implementing, communicating and planning of procedures and programs of special programs [5]. There are different advantages of inclusive education for disabled students, such as

- Spending time with children who do not have any disabilities gives them a chance to interact with the world.
- Disabled children have proper behaviour models. They can imitate and observe the behaviour that is socially acceptable in children without disability.
- Teachers frequently develop higher performance standards to educate disabled children.
- Both special and general educators in the settings of inclusion expect proper behaviour from every student.
- Disabled children are taught functional components and age-appropriate academic content, which might be segmented in the curriculum with the settings of segregated.
- Inclusive education makes sure that institutes acknowledge the need for the education of community children.

Different activities performed by SSA to facilitate the practices and setup of inclusive education in Assam

SSA gives up to price Rs. 3000 per child in the inclusive education of children with disability per year. District plan of the special needs children is evaluated at Rs. 3000 per child along with Rs. 1000 extra for resource teachers' engagement [15]. The different interventions beneath SSA in the context of inclusive education are formal, identification and functional assessment proper to the placement of education.



Figure 3: The planning Process under SSA

(Source: [8])

These help in developing an individualized plan of education, aids provisions, teacher training and monitoring. Different activities performed by SSA are-

- Distribution of appliances and aids
- Organization of medical evaluation camp
- Corrective surgery
- Dispersal of braille books
- A boundary-free environment in the school
- Developing of railings and ramps as well as toilet modification
- Foundation volunteers courses
- Deployment of resource volunteers and teachers
- Giving education of home-based
- Maintenance of education plan and child profile
- Developed various sensitisation programmes about disability
- Give escort and transport allowance to disable children
- Training and Counselling of parents for association
- Convergence, along with other agencies
- Distribution certificate of disability

The main objectives of SSA within the “*UEE or universalization of elementary education*” are enrolment of all children who are aged group 6 to 14 years. Their goal was further enhanced by the “*86 th Amendment Act*”, which aims to make compulsory and free education is right of fundamental of all. The SSA is giving inclusive education to disabled children in a wider range. This comprises of open school and opens learning systems that make disabled children more connected to education [8]. Vocational and community-based education is also important to make them more comfortable with communication and education to children without disability. The investment of education under SSA to nurture inclusive education are formal, identified and functional assessments, which are proper to developing an education plan as per the requirement of every child.

Methodology

Methodology in research is the proper techniques and procedures that are used to select, identify, analyze and process data about the study topic. Within a paper of research, the part of methodology permits individuals to critically assess the study’s reliability and validity [10]. In this research paper, “*secondary qualitative research methodology*” has been used to analyse the data in the study. This study methodology also uses an inductive approach to the analysis [13]. The approach of inductive is a procedure of systematic to analyze qualitative information where the investigation is guided by the proper objectives of the evaluation. The data of this research study has been collected from Google Scholar, journals, and newspapers. The given data in this study can be said to be reliable as it was collected from different journals. The reason behind choosing newspapers and journals is that they provide an authentic source of data. Moreover, in the design of the research, the descriptive design will be applied in this matter of subject. The research design of descriptive mainly concentrated on attaining adequate information besides the whole description of this specific research study.

The methods of quantitative majorly defined as a proper collection of numerical data that could be analyzed and examined by the methods of statistical. However, this kind of data collection method is mainly get used for conducting any type of questionnaire or survey in another type of research article method. It also analyzes the significant variables and develops a specific relationship with those variables. On the other side, the data gathering procedure of qualitative is a data collection method that specifically collects non-numerical data and mainly concentrates on existing information for understanding the major concepts. In this research study, the procedure of qualitative data collection will be employed to complete the study [12]. Furthermore, at the time of gathering data regarding this study, it would make sure that all the information would have been taken from authentic journals, case studies and research papers.

Findings and Discussion

From this research paper, it has been found that after independence, India has worked severely on the ground of inclusive education to educate disabled children. Different committees have been set as well as many laws have also been passed that primarily help disabled children to receive a quality education. Different schemes have been implemented by the central government as well as each state. Among different states in the country, Assam has introduced a centrally financed scheme, “*Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*”, especially to help children with special needs [9]. Assam also held hands with UNESCO to develop a better plan for implementing an education programme which can help disabled children return to the mainstream line. SSA is an initiative of the Indian government to implement elementary education in the school system. The education of disabled children is a significant characteristic of the framework of SSA. Three main

characteristics of inclusive education in SSA are a policy of zero rejection, planning flexibility and education in the most suited environment. It has also been found that by the implementation of the “86th Amendment Act” permits free education of children who 6 to 14 age group. It can be said that the primary motive of the government is to give access to proper education to all irrespective of disability [14]. From the above research study, it has been observed that disability can be of various types, and it is important to develop an educational framework that will be suitable for all. The State Government of Assam also gives different types of scholarships that will encourage students to receive an education. It can be understood that to educate special needs children, responsible teachers are needed. It is the duty of the government to facilitate different teachers' training programmes with more advanced techniques that primarily teach disabled children. In order to give education to the specially-abled children, the premises of the school have to be more advanced that can simplify the activity of those children. There has been noticeable progress in achieving the accessibility targets and the enrollment number of disabled children has also progressed daily. The concentration of SSA is divergent to reach out to those schools where education for special needs children is not available. They tried to develop more institutions that can educate disabled children in a regular environment. Included of the maximum number of NSOs within the programme of Inclusive Education by SSA requires to be reinforced. It is also important to make sure that each child with a disability receives ongoing support of onsite. It has been observed that to teach disabled children it is important to train their parents as they spend a maximum of their time in the ground of the house. This is the reason it is necessary to give proper training and Counselling to the parents of disabled children. It has been found that there are only 140 resource teachers in Assam, and it is important to increase the number of children. The number of total NGOs in Assam included in Inclusive Education under SSA is 13, increasing the involvement of NGOs is also necessary. The total number of schools that has barrier-free education in Assam is 41,278, it is also important to enhance these schools which provide education of barrier free [7]. In order to educate disabled children it is important to implement barrier-free education in the premises of school. It also has been found that the attitude of teachers towards “*child's inclusion with special needs*” within the general setting of school was positive.

Conclusion

SSA has to play a significant role within inclusive education that primarily assisted children to develop social responsibility. Education is the “*Fundamental Right*” and it has to free access to all. This is the reason the government has made education free for children aged between 6 years to 14 years. The aim of SSA is to give inclusive education to disabled children within the premises of regular schools. This specific programme is strived to give a scope to enhance the capabilities of humans by community provision via quality education and it should be in a mode of mission. The implementation of this inclusive education within the programme of SSA makes this possible as much more flexibility is suggested to every state by this definite scheme. The innovation and practices in SSA are leading the way to enhanced identification of “*children with special needs*”. Implementing this programme in all school including regular institutions is the main challenge as every school has to develop special guidelines to generate inclusive education. The number of resource teachers has to increase in this way; teachers can guide every student more precisely.

SSA is the main agency to implement education of inclusive in the region of Assam. The SSA has a powerful framework base within the education place of children with disability. Sufficient progress has been ongoing to ensure access to equal education and implementing a learning environment for disabled children. There are additional resource individuals and resource persons at the block and cluster level to give essential support for learning to disabled children. Moreover, it is required to more employ of resource persons who are helping to enroll a maximum number of special children in school by encouraging them and their parents. The overall study stated that the teachers of schools in Assam have somewhat positive attitudes towards disabled children. This study implies the requirement of the awareness programs of systematic organization on disability is needed.

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