COGNITIVE DISCOURSES

INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

Ethical Education

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Abstract

Now-a-days, the root cause of crime, violence, sufferings, unrest is lack of observance of ethical values among civic populations, groups, societies and nations. Human beings are blessed with the highest brain development but because of lack of global values like- human values, sympathy, empathy, universal brotherhood societies are no more peaceful these days. Selfishness, domination, superiority feeling is common among people and nations leading to erosion of values. Any system, organization cannot be run without certain minimum basic values, rules and regulations, ethical code and the like and same applies to human beings too. So, it is time the concept of ethics and values are introduced to students from Primary education either as a separate subject as "Ethical Education" or as part of subjects already existing. The suggested topics are: Ethical values, ethical code of conduct, family relations, human bondages, importance of family, being as a unit, core values – Truth, goodness and beauty, equality, humanity, human values, universal brotherhood, protection and support of weaker and sensitive sections of society- children, handicapped/ differently able etc. Unless ethical education is made mandatory, these values cannot be inculcated in children - the future citizens of the world. Ethical education is going to play a crucial role in the existence of humanity itself.

Keywords: ethical values, human values, ethical education

Introduction

Ancient Indian philosophy exhorted three permanent and ever greatest values, Sathyam, Shivam & Sundaram. It means, in this ever-changing world, Truth- Goodness & Beauty are the permanent values for which all have to strive. Truth is speaking and sticking to truth and Dharma or righteousness, this concept itself is Goodness or Godliness and that is beauty of life, which gives happiness. These values need to be focussed in this modern world also, which is full of ego-centric nature and domination.

Need and Significance of the Topic

M.K Gandhiji, the father of our nation opined, "An eye for eye makes the whole world blind." That means the mutual hatred; revengeful attitude will never yield in peaceful society. Now –a – days, the root cause of crime, violence, sufferings, unrest is lack of observance of ethical values among civic populations, groups, societies and nations. Human beings are blessed with the highest brain development but because of lack of global values like- human values, sympathy, empathy, universal brotherhood societies are no more peaceful these days. Selfishness, domination, superiority feeling is common among people and nations leading to erosion of values. The consequence of value degradation is: violence, disruption of peace, sufferings, exploitation and threat to humanity itself.

The aim of education is to realise the optimum potential of learners. The same is the purpose of values. Hence values and education are inseparable. Swami Vivekananda defined education as "We want education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one's feet." Hence it is essential to understand,

realise the aim of education, aim of life and follow the track laid by great Indian philosophers so that our life is guided by ethical values and we all can live peace.

Importance of Values

Any system, organization cannot be run without certain minimum basic values, rules and regulations, ethical code and the like and same applies to human beings too. So it is time the concept of ethics and values are introduced to students from Primary education either as a separate subject as "Ethical Education" or as part of subjects already existing. We witness several unfortunate things today – unrest among youth, increase in crime, open defiance to authority, divisive forces, exploitation of weaker sections like women, children, disabled etc. With this backdrop, value-based education must be given top priority in the present educational scenario.

Values need not be thought as ideals; instead, they give strength to attain empowerment, developing decision making capacity and to face challenges of life. Essential values that can be inculcated, spread, practiced and implemented like: truth, character, honesty, love, peace, human relationship, patience, altruism, tolerance, concern for environment and social responsibility. It paves the way for sustainable development. The Constitution of India under the dynamic leadership of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar explicitly upholds the basic social values – Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity to all citizens.

Views of Various Committees & Commissions on Values & Value-based Education

Zakir Hussain's Committee on Basic National Education, University Education Commission (1948-49), Sri Prashanth's Committee on Religious and Moral Instruction (1960), say that the only cure to all problems is to deliberately inculcate moral and spiritual values at the earliest years of life.

Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) suggested cultivation of discipline, social sensitivity, tolerance, openness of mind, large heart, objectivity, secular values etc.

Kothari Commission(1964-66), A High Level Seminar on Value oriented Education organised by NCERT at Shimla (1991), NPE (1968,1986,1990) , Core Group on Value Orientation of Education, Government Of India 1992, all these stressed the need to inculcate moral, ethical, human and spiritual values to sustain the society. They suggested that at least one period a week is to be allotted to impart and inculcate values among children. Kareena Bhatia & Manoj Kumar Dash(2013). National Educational Policy NEP 2020 specifically mentioned five universal values "Truth, Peace, Non-violence, Love, Righteous conduct." The Supreme Court of India also stressed that value based education is likely to help the nation to fight against all kinds of prevailing fanaticism, ill-will, violence, dishonesty, corruption, exploitation and drug abuse. Value Education organized by UNESCO in 1998, encourages schools to review their curricula of value education. It stresses the need of teaching values in the school administration.

Ethical Education

Ethical education helps students to get awareness regarding core values, understand the different perspective of values, reflect on the upholding of values using their own critical thinking and the importance of equality, justice to all citizens of the nation as well as internationally. Unless ethical education is made mandatory, these values cannot be inculcated in children - the future citizens of the world. Ethical education is going to play a crucial role in the existence of humanity itself. World Health Organization introduced life skills education and gave list of ten life skills:

Figure 1

List of Life Skills by World Health Organization (WHO)

In India, in 2005, CBSE introduced life skills education as an integral part of curricula through Continuous Comprehensive Education for classes 6 to 10 through life skills manuals.

Implementation of Ethical Education

Ethical education as a separate subject is to be introduced from Primary school level till University education. Truth, honesty, universal brotherhood, equality, constitutional values, justice etc values need to be inculcated among students, else the system is already on the brink of collapse. Ethical education is to be practiced among children and students through activities, live group discussions, sharing of oppression incidents and experiences faced by students in their life time, debates, brainstorming sessions, information gathering, seminars, hands on experience

through simulated projects and the like. Peer evaluation in addition to that of teaching faculty is recommended in this regard.

Conclusion

Unless ethical education is made mandatory, these values cannot be inculcated in children - the future citizens of the world. Ethical education is going to play a crucial role in the existence of humanity itself. India's uniqueness is unity in diversity. So this value also needs to be upheld to maintain unity and oneness among all Indians.

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Equitable Inclusion of the Hard of Hearing: Aspirations and Apprehensions

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Abstract

Inclusive Education has been a major area of concern in the ever-widening educational environment of 21st century. It has been found as the basic stride in our journey towards an inclusive society that embraces every individual as they are. Inclusive education advocates for bringing those diverse groups of children who were sidelined for their socio-economic and cultural background, disability, etc. to the mainstream education. In inclusion the diversity of the children is not understood as something to be ashamed of, blamed nor changed. It is the system that is being modified to accommodate the children hence when a classroom turns inclusive it must make several adaptations to meet the requirements of the diversity of the children. This paper is an attempt to analyse the scope, prospects, and barriers regarding the inclusion of children who are hard of hearing.

Keywords: inclusion, hard of hearing, equity, mainstream

Introduction

It has not been a long while since we have started to find and acknowledge people with disabilities as significant members of society. From time immemorial disabled people were mere subjects of subjugation. For centuries, the disabled were doomed to live in the dungeon of stigma, shame, and suffering. Later these people were sent to asylums, finding them as burden. It took several years more even for segregated education to begin. To recognize these people as are again a long wait was required. Having reached the doorstep of an inclusive society where every

individual is recognized alike regardless of their differences at last, we have made a great achievement in our social evolution.

Agenda 2030 and the Provisions for Inclusive Education

Though many recommendations have been made upon the concept of inclusive education it was the UN 2030 Agenda that gave a new impetus to our journey towards an inclusive society through inclusive education. It is a remarkable vision for a more prosperous world. Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals simply called SDGs, Goal 4 deals with aspects of education. In SDG target 4.5, equal access to education for vulnerable Groups, including persons with disabilities is demanded. Following the recommendations of this vision nations have made hopeful legislations and frameworks for inclusion. UNESCO's 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report has revealed the progress the nations have achieved in policy frameworks as well as legal frameworks. One of the major findings of the report was the inclination towards segregation still prevailing in Asian, Latin American, and Caribbean countries.

Figure 1

Comparison of Policy and Legislation Approaches in Education for Children with Disabilities
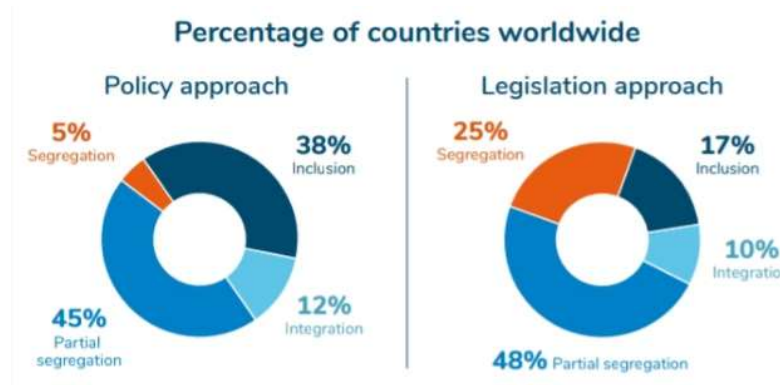
Source. UNESCO (2020). "Inclusion and Education: All means all- Global Education Monitoring Report"

What is Inclusion?

Based on the principle of equity, inclusion is the practice of making sure that everyone irrespective of their difference has access to the resources and opportunities in the society. In education it aims in bringing to the mainstream education children from diverse backgrounds who were marginalised such as girls, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, minorities, economically weaker sections, children with disability, children affected by migration or war, children in areas affected by civil strife, victims of child labour, children working as domestic help, children in conflict with law, children in protective institutions, children of parents affected By HIV, AIDS and other chronic and severe ailments, children affected by natural disasters and any other group with social, cultural, economic, geographical, linguistic, gender or such other disadvantage.

Inclusion and Equity

Inclusion can only be practised on the idea of equity. It is the principle of equity that offers the provision for infrastructural and other support systems in the inclusive school. Following Jacob and Holsinger (2008, p. 4) we define equality as "the state of Being equal in terms of quantity, rank, status, value or degree", while equity "considers the social justice ramifications of education in relation to the fairness, justness and impartiality of its distribution at all levels or educational sub-sectors". We consider equity to assure that a distribution is fair or justified. Inclusion is possible only if an equity mindedness is being nurtured. Equity mindedness, in the words of Dr. Estela, is "a way of approaching educational reform that foregrounds the policies and practices contributing to disparities in educational achievement and abstains from blaming students for those accumulated disparities." In equity mindedness it is the school structure and hence the social system that is believed to make changes and not the students. Deficit-mindedness on the other hand is a mindset that blames the student, his family and community for his shortcomings. Equity

263

equips us to treat people differently to meet their requirements. By properly addressing the requirements of each student they are brought to a realm where they can find a sort of equality. As part of this a "Culturally Responsive Pedagogy" that recognise students' identities, make them at ease to assert their identities and help them to be themselves needs to be adopted in the classroom. The children should be able to find themselves not as "the other" but as an integral part of functioning of this society. Equity covers a wide range of aspects such as racial, gender, economic, social, etc.

Hearing Impairment

The human existence as social being is fundamentally depended on the interaction he has with his fellow beings. A major part of our communication takes place by means of speech though the role of nonverbal communication is not less. It is because of the same, people with speech and hearing impairment find it very difficult to assert their identity in the social set up. Though cognitive theorists like Noam Chomsky argue about the innate capacity of a child to acquire language that can't diminish the influence of his exposure to speaking. For hearing impaired children, it is this exposure that is being curtailed.

Hearing loss is of two types- conductive hearing loss and perceptive or sensorineural hearing loss. In the first type the vibrations that represent sound waves do not reach the inner ear that is the conduction of sound waves doesn't take place properly. The second type of hearing loss- occurs when there is a fault in the cochlea or the nerve to the brain. If there is damage of the brain the hearing loss can be permanent.

Sign language and lip reading are the major conventional practices followed by hard of hearing people to communicate with others. Speech therapy can also help them a lot. Over the

years several means of assistive technology have been developed to support people who are hard of hearing. For conductive hearing loss, bone conduction hearing aids are in use. These amplify sound via vibrations through the bones of the skull which then stimulate the cochlea directly. In the case of sensorineural hearing loss if the impairment is mild a hearing aid can be used. But for those who are deaf or severely hard of hearing a cochlear implant might be useful. Surgically implanted Cochlear implants stimulate the auditory nerve to give the sensation of sound.

Though hearing aids and cochlear implants are in use none of them can guarantee a quality that is equal to normal hearing.

Policies and Strategies for Inclusion of Hard of Hearing

When children who are hard of hearing are concerned, a lot of changes need to take place in our existing system. The changes should appear on various levels. The school infrastructure, the curriculum, assessment practices, classroom activities, learning aids, technology tools- all need to be restructured. While inclusion is to be practiced certain policies and strategies also need to be employed beforehand. This may include:

Policies on Enrolment

When inclusion is to be practiced certainly there may be some resistance against it. Policies of enrolment plays a role here. Policies must be fashioned in such a manner that students and parents may get attracted to these policies.

Accessibility

The greatest concern the parents of hard of hearing children have is regarding the accessibility of provisions in the general school set up. The general schools must be able to provide the necessary accessibility systems for the new students.

Facilities for Transportation

Since public transportation facilities haven't evolved as inclusive and safe, children who are hard of hearing might require transportation facilities for the successful completion of their schooling.

Adequacy of Funds

Government funding along with stakeholder funding can help our schools to be better inclusive havens. Availability of funds must be ensured so that no delay can happen once the system starts functioning. Since a huge number of assistive technologies is required public funding may be necessary.

Readiness of Schools, Teachers, etc.

No matter society has advanced this much, there are still people who find disabled people as a curse or a burden. Such negative attitude is seen among teachers as well. Creating a readiness among the teaching community and the school managements is of great importance.

Provision for Pedagogical Assistance

Since an inclusive classroom have children from diverse groups their needs also vary. So, the school must have pedagogical assistants who are resourceful in dealing children of different needs.

Policies for Transition

When inclusion is promoted, legislations are required to encourage the shift from segregation to inclusion. Provisions for awareness programmes, training for in-service teachers, etc. need to be addressed in the transition policy framework.

Teacher Education

To achieve all the aims of inclusive education, changes must be introduced from the teacher education phase itself. The prospective teachers must be provided with amble exposure to inclusive classrooms. They must be taught to prepare and practice inclusive lesson plans.

Special school

When students are brought into inclusive classroom, the special schools can extend their service as resource centres for these children. Such centres can even act as a link between a group of schools.

Curriculum and Textbooks

A thorough restructuring is required for the curriculum as well as the textbooks. Curriculum should contain inclusive choices for learning experiences from which the student can

choose according to his interest. Governmental interventions should be made in producing deaf friendly e-contents that can transact the learning objectives.

Class Size

As inclusive classrooms demand more individualistic attention for students from the teachers, it is a necessity to restructure the size of the class and the number of students in a class.

Instruction

Since the teacher has to address the hard of hearing students mastery in the sign language is a basic requirement. Inclusion of a greater number of visual and tactile aids should be practised. While taking the class, the teacher should position herself at a distance that is comfortable for the students to view. The pace of speech should be adjusted so that those who follow the lip movements can read lips more easily.

Individual Education Plan IEP

Every child who is hard of hearing is different in his/her own way. Assisted by an implant or not they all differ in comprehending. Besides this are their differences in the cognitive, affective, emotional, and social levels. So, while cater the needs of the children, the teacher must adopt an Individual Education Plan that better suits the child.

Multiple Disabilities

If a child with hearing impairment has any other disabilities-physical, intellectual, etc.- provisions to address those differences must also be addressed.

Benefits of Inclusion of Hard of Hearing

The most important benefit of inclusive education lies in the harmony being created in the classroom. Following a segregated education won't help children recognise themselves as inevitable part of the society and that is why inclusive classroom is found as the foundation of an inclusive society. The descriptions of classroom as a microcosm are attained only when the inclusive aim is achieved. In the segregated environment the hard of hearing children can but identify themselves only as the 'other'. The sad reality is that from the earlier days itself they identify themselves as the other. Their world view is even formed in a dichotomous manner – a world of the normal and a world of them.

When special schools are chosen for education, the children may have to stay away from their homes because of the lack of availability of such institutions near house. Since general schools are set up at comfortable distance inclusion can help these students continue their education without leaving their hometown or village. This will help them better understand their locality and its culture as well.

The benefit of inclusion is not limited to the hard of hearing students alone. Everyone in a class irrespective of their differences enjoys the benefits. Inclusion helps students understand and acknowledge differences. If disability was perceived as a challenge before, with inclusion they start to find it as opportunity.

Barriers in Inclusion of Hard of Hearing

The first issue that inclusion addresses is the negative attitude among the teachers and parents. Several teachers are reluctant to have students with disabilities in their classrooms. Same kind of an attitude is seen in the parents as well. Lack of funds and stakeholder support for setting

up inclusive environment is another important difficulty. If strategies for inclusion are not properly applied there is high chance for the students to feel alienated in the class. Another problem arises from the difficulty they have in expressing their ideas before class due to a lack of confidence. They may even feel shy expressing ideas through signs or the limited verbatim they have. If the peers and teachers can't use sign language that will be a hindrance for the included. The lack of suitable resources for teaching is yet another issue. If the teaching aids used fails, both the students and teachers might find it difficult. The expertise of the teacher also becomes a serious concern. Another major concern is whether the teacher could attend to the individualistic needs of the students. Since the students might require more time for information processing compared to other students it can make them feel inferior. If the assessment systems are not in accordance with the specific needs of the students that too will have a negative impact on them. Brought into a new environment where the hard of hearing children must meet and greet those who hear and speak there is a high chance for anxiety and stress as well. Though classrooms are getting inclusive many a times the teacher education rules aren't in favour of accommodating the hard of hearing applicants. This in fact reduces the necessary representation of hard of hearing educators whose presence could have been a motivation for the hard of hearing students in assimilating to the new environment.

Suggestions

At the basis, the classroom climate must be maintained with the cooperative effort of all in such a manner that no student feels estranged or alienated in the class. It must not be functioning upon sympathy but on the principle of equity. All students must be able to interact with each other so effortlessly that they forget the boundaries existed between them before. They must be taught to accept disabilities not as hurdles but as part of individuality.

The students may at first feel some sort of stigma or shame. To overcome this, they may need a good counselling. We must encourage them to participate in group activities with everyone. No matter whether hard of hearing children are in the general school or special school, adequate opportunities must be created for them to have enough interaction with the deaf community. This will help them have discussions on their own experiences.

Much emphasis should be given to the learning of sign language. Governments should take legislations as to recognise sign language as one of the official languages. This will certainly give an impetus to learning of sign language among the public. When everyone learns to sign, the barriers the hard of hearing students face while trying to communicate with others and vice versa will dissolve gradually.

While teaching in an inclusive classroom, the teacher should resort to maximum utilisation of all the senses. Visual and tactile aids will help these children to better understand the concepts. The teacher must recognise the scope of experiential and activity learning in such a class. Inclusive friendly assessment practices are required to be employed. Since these children have limitations in expressing things verbally, alternate options must be provided. When a discussion or debate is conducted in the class, teacher should ensure the participation of every student. Having such a condition doesn't mean that they can't be part of all these. They must be encouraged to express their ideas by whichever way they prefer. Some may be comfortable writing while others may sign. To help and support the hard of hearing children with their psychological needs, the service of an expert counsellor must be ensured in the school.

Conclusion

Living in a technology driven society that has even challenged to control the very mechanism of the human brain, that which is obsessed with the idea of settling in some other planet, that is in constant search of a state of no death, the confidence these novel technologies throw on inclusive education are no less. When cost effective technologies will be made available in the future, disability or disadvantage may not be a concern anymore. By offering AI powered assistive devices, the technology of the Fourth Industrial Revolution has become the greatest advocate of equity. When these technologies can be incorporated to our practices of inclusion in education stupendous changes are possible. Just as Jake Sully in Avatar movie finds a new life through advanced technology, those restricting disabled conditions like hearing impairment may be overcome with the help of advanced assistive technologies of the future. The AI supported Neuralink being introduced recently by Elon Musk and his team, eyeglasses with built-in hearing aids, etc. are enough to raise our hopes. Still, a collective effort is certainly necessary from the part of the stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of inclusive practices in education.

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