

CREATING PROCEDURAL DIMENSION FOR INFLUENCING A SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

Rakiya Rabe

*Department of Psychology, Federal College of Education,
Kano State – Nigeria*

Abstract

This paper is aimed at providing answers on how inclusive classroom should be accomplished by “creating procedural dimensions of the programme. Inclusive classroom practices reflect the changing culture of contemporary schools with emphasis on active learning authentic assessment practices, applied curriculum, multi-level in structural approaches and increase in attention to students needs and individualization. Topical issues raised in this paper include concept and meaning of inclusive education, principles, practices, teaching programme, individualized educational plan financial provision, and benefit of an inclusive classroom.

Introduction

The new anti-discriminatory climate has provided the basis for many changes in educational policy, objectives, content, materials, evaluation techniques and statute, nationally and internationally in which special education will not be an exempted. Inclusion has been enshrined as segregation and discrimination have been rejected and outlawed. Articulation of the new developments in way of thinking in policy, objectives, methods, content, evaluation techniques and in law include. The UNESCO Salamanca (1994), which call on all governments to give the highest priority to inclusive education.

In order to create procedural dimensions of inclusive education, one has to reject segregation or exclusion of learners, for whatever reason, ability gender, language, care status, family income, disability, sexuality, colour, religion or ethnic origin, maximizing the participation of all learners in the community school of their choice, making learning more meaningful and relevant for all, particularly those learners most vulnerable to exclusionary pressure. Rethinking and restricting policies, curricula, cultures and practices in schools and learning environments so that diverse learning needs can be met, whatever the origin or nature of these needs. One has to also know that, inclusion is about school change to improve the educational system for all students. It means change in the curriculum, change in how teachers teach and students learn as well as changes in how students with and without special needs interact with and relate to one another. Inclusive Education practices reflect the changing culture of contemporary schools with emphasis on active learning, authentic assessment practices, applied curriculum, multi-level in structural approaches, and increased attention to students needs and individualization.

The claim is that, schools centres of learning and educational systems must change so that they become caring, nurturing and supportive educational communities where the needs of all students and teachers are truly met. In this paper, we are going to look through the meaning, principles, practice teaching programme, procedures, and benefits of inclusive education as a means of creating a procedural dimension of inclusive education.

Inclusive Education

The movement towards inclusion of children with special needs in regular classes began in the 1970's and gain movement in the late 1980's and early 1990's, has dramatically change the nature of Special Educational prevision. It even has major impact in the role of the regular classroom teachers who are now required to cater for the varied and diverse categories of student. Inclusion connotes three or even more shades of meaning:- Ozoji: (2005).

First, it entails enabling all learners to participate fully in the life work of mainstreaming setting whatever their needs.

Secondly, it conveys a continuing process of breaking down barriers to learning and participation of all children and young people.

Thirdly, it implies the right to belong to mainstream or a join undertaking to and discrimination and to work towards equal opportunities for all pupils and students. Inclusion simply means "putting together".

When we work inclusive into a democratic point of view Margai and Henry (2003), defines it as: "An effort to equalize Educational opportunities for all children regardless of their physical, mental, conditions, gender, labour, creed or language".

Education is the right of all children and Inclusive Education aims to ensure that all children have access to an appropriate, relevant, affordable and effective education within their community. Thus, education stands in the home with the family and includes formal, non-formal and all type of community-based education initiatives. Within schools inclusive education is an approach, which aims to develop a child focus by acknowledging that all children are individuals with different learning needs and speeds. Teaching and learning can become more effective, relevant and fun for all. Therefore, Inclusive Education will always be good for all schools, although all schools may not be good for all children (Lerner 2000).

Principles of Inclusive Education

Ayo (2009), says, the principles of inclusive education which has to be considered in creating a procedural dimension of Inclusive Education are as follows:-

- Every student has an inherent right to education on basis of equality of opportunity
- No student is excluded from, or discriminated within education on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, ethnic or social origin, disability, birth, poverty or other status.

- All students can learn and benefit from education.
- Schools adapt to the needs of students, rather than student adapting to the needs of school.
- The students view are listened to and taken seriously.
- Individual differences between students are a source of richness and diversity, and not a problem.
- The diversity of needs and pace of development of students are addressed through a wide and flexible range of responses. Also in creating a procedural dimension of inclusive education, we must consider the practice of developing inclusive schools which include the following:-
 - Understanding inclusion as a continuing process, not one-time event.
 - Strengthening and sustaining the participation of all students, teachers, parents and community members in the work of the school.
 - Restricting the cultures, policies and practices in school to respond to the diversity of pupils within their locality. Inclusive settings focus on identifying and the reducing the barriers to learning and participation, rather than on what is “Special” about the individual students or group of students, and targeting services to address the “problem”.
 - Providing an accessible curriculum, appropriate training programs for teachers, and for all students, the provision of fully accessible information, environments and support.
 - Identifying and providing support to staff as well as students.

Procedures

Ayo (2009), said, the necessary procedures of Inclusive Education that will incorporate the varied categories of students with disability in an academy are as follows:-

First step is to carryout feasibility study of what is needed, the basic requirements, personnel, instruments, physical plant, assertive, technologies, Para-Professionals, enabling policy, research, effective public information etc.

The next stage is to develop training materials for the stake holders including regular and special education teachers. As a new programme experts and specialist are required to write training manuals and to introduce same in teacher institutions or special institute for this purpose. An example of such kind is “The Staff College”, “Inclusive Education of Queensland”. The institute assist to identify staff learning needs relating to inclusive education.

The next step is the establishment of pilot schools where the entire assessed and addressed before the programme is implemented Nation Wide.

The next step is disability awareness. Nationwide awareness of disability is necessary for a successful implementation of an inclusive classroom. At least public support and backing is highly needed.

The next step is developing awareness at the new policy. This presupposes that administrative machinery is set up to coordinate the programme, monitor its implementation etc.

Then the continues parental involvement, identification of team members, identifying and described students current Educational Programme, monitor students progress and modify plan as needed.

In creating a procedural dimension of Inclusive Education, one has to put in mind all the ways in achieving the mentioned goals of the programme, and the goals can easily be achieve through pointing out of the all requirements for inclusive education which are as follows:-

1. Government Policies and Backing

Inclusive Education must enjoy full and forceful Government backing for it to succeed. Government must go beyond policy specification, as is the case in National Policy on Education. This time around, the government documents should spell out the objectives, mode of implementation and monitoring of individual students progress, resources allocation and funding and how it is to integrated into school system. Government should from time to time set forth guidelines for implementation of Inclusive Education. For instance in UK Government recommends the index for inclusion published by (CSIE) in a number of its documents, including its guidance to schools on implementing the new strategies framework for inclusion. Government should develop legislative framework for inclusion. In Lesotho, there is the ministry of special and Inclusive Education. Her model of inclusion is indigenous and community based and addresses all barriers to learning and development that result in the exclusion of learners from the culture and curriculum of school. the MOE MOSCOW has a department for the early childhood education (ECE), which is responsible for 2,900 ECE institutions. This type of policy and visions is what works.

2. Adequate Financial Provisions

This is self explanatory in itself, in Britain, there are two main sources of government funds for inclusions: the schools access initiative and the Special Education need element of the standard fund. Millions of pounds are sourced through these sources for inclusion. In Nigeria we need similar specific funding for inclusion.

3. Effective Public Information

This is needed to combat prejudice, to create informed and positive attitudes. Staff and students are prepared to receive children with disabilities. The public top support for inclusive education can be obtained when it is sufficiently informed and the various ways it can support adequately rationalized.

4. Extensive Programme of Orientation and Staff Training

Adequate staff development and in-service training for services teachers is needed in the area of philosophy and implementation of inclusive education; on how to develop collaborate skills for teaming and problems solving, on how to create an inclusive classroom environment, on how to select and adapt curriculum, on instructional methods according to needs. Training needs studies and addressed. The training should provide adequate number of personnel including aids and supportive services.

5. Provision of Continuing Support Services

Services needed by children should be available (Health, physical, occupational or speech therapy). A coordinating agency should be on hand to offer technical assistance including mandatory testing. The success story of IE in advanced countries can be traced to active involvement of private initiatives. Many non-governmental organizations provide supports in ways that move IE forward in their countries. For instance, in Britain, such organizations include (CSIE)

Alliance for Inclusive Education (AIE); Disability Equality in Education (DEE), and so many others. These organizations carry out critical advocacy bids, research and volunteer work in order to promote the course of IE.

Teaching/Programming

Ayo (2009), says, It is general practice that students in an Inclusive Classroom are with their chronological age-mates. Also, to encourage a sense of belonging, emphasis is placed on the value of friendship. Teachers are often nurturing a relationship between a student with a special needs and a peer without need.

Another common practice is the assignment of buddy to accompany a students with special needs at all times (for example in cafeteria, on play ground, on the bus and so on).

In principle, several factors can determine the success of inclusive classrooms, which include:-

- Family school partnerships
- Collaboration between general and special educators
- Well-constructed individualized education programme plans
- Team planning and communication
- Integrated service delivery
- Games designed to build community
- Involving students in solving problems
- Song and books that teach community

Example, homeroom, specials such as art and gym, lunch, recess, assemblies and electives. Special need students involved in the classrooms will give the time they need to participate in activities with their peer without need.

Conclusion

With the Salamanca declaration of (1994), which affirms that regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes towards the special needs, creating well coming communities building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. Therefore, the task of educating special need children in school is no longer the duty of special teachers alone, regular teachers have to take part in the programme. All teacher education programmes in Nigeria must integrate the teaching of special education to ensure the realization of the statement's goals.

In the light of the conclusion, the following recommendations were offered:

Creating procedural dimension of Inclusive Education will really help all sorts of children both normal and disabled. For that government as a matter of urgency should look into creative, dimensions of inclusive education written by different authors and presenters and implement fully the programme.

- Encouraging the principle of team teaching at all levels for teachers to share ideas.
- Better remuneration need to be advocated and encouraged

References

- Ayo, G. Inclusive Education in 21st Century: Challenge and Oppo. [http://www.aifo.it/english/resource/outline/aodry203/includednigeria/pdf\(14march,2009\)](http://www.aifo.it/english/resource/outline/aodry203/includednigeria/pdf(14march,2009)).
- Lerner, Janet W. (2000). Learning Disabilities: Theories, Diagnosis, and Teaching Strategies. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. ISBN 035961149.
- Margai, F. & Henry, N. (2003). A Community-based assessment of learning disabilities using environmental and contextual risk factors. *Social Science & Medicine*, 56(5), 13.
- National Dissemination Centre for Children with Disabilities (NICHY), 2004. (1) (http://www.nichcy.org/pubs/facsh_e/fs17txt.htm) Accessed May 11, 2007.
- Ozaji, E.D. (2005). Special Education and Rehabilitation for the Beginner Professional (Revised Edition) Jos: Deka Publication. Jos, Nigeria.
- Thomas, G. (1997). Inclusive Schools for an Inclusive Society. *British Journal of Special Education*. Vol. 3 no. 3 100. 3-1007.
- UNESCO (1994), World Conference on Special Needs Education Access an Quality. Salamanca Statement. Paris Author.
- UNESCO (1999). Inclusive Education in the light of the Salamanca Statement and Framework for action on Special Education Paris. UNESCO.