School Culture and Inclusive Education : A Review of the Literature

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Abstract: *This article presents an overview of inclusion a practice that is being utilized increasingly in schools across the country. In inclusive schools students who have disabilities learn together with their non disabled peers. Teacher and support staff collaborate to serve all the students in integrated classes. This literature review will discuss (a) School's Culture as an aspect of inclusion. (b) Teachers attitude toward Inclusion. An inclusive culture starts from the premise that everyone in the school – students, educators, administrators, support staff and parents – should feel that they belong and contribute to the life of the school. Within an inclusive school culture, diverse experiences, perspective and gifts are seen to enrich the school community.*

Keyword *: School Culture, Inclusive Education*

Introduction

An Inclusive classroom is one that values the contributions of all students, their families and communities. It recognises that every learner is unique and builds in their languages, culture and interest and identifies and removes any barriers to achievements. "Respect comes with love and understanding each kid's abilities" (Kliewer & Biklen, 2001, P.11) cited in spring boards to practice, Ministry of Education.

All students are active, capable learner with unique potential. However students demonstrate competence in a range of ways and progress at different rates. Knowning our learners requires us as teachers to build relationship with them and to understand what we bring to these relationships – we need to know ourselves well in order to be able to really come to know our learners. Our assumptions can either support inclusive practices or more barriers to students participating and learning. If students comes with "labels" or diagnosed disabilities, we should not assume they are less capable of learning than their peers.

Developing an Inclusive classroom culture the bulk of the inclusive education scholarship has neglected fundamental question about the cultural history of education and its link to larger deological struggles that have shaped differential access and opportunities or various group in society. These questions include who benefits from inclusion? Where are these students included? What is culture of schools.

Meaning of School Culture

"The culture of a school consists primarily of the underlying norm values and beliefs that teachers and administrators hold about teaching and learning" according to Dr. Kent D. Peterson. Every school has underlying assumption about what staff members will discuss at meetings, which teaching techniques work well, how amenable the staff is to change and how critical staff development.

The term school culture generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how school function but the term also encompasses more. Concrete issue such as the physical and emotional safety of student the underlines of the classrooms and public spaces or the degree to which a School embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic or culture diversity.

A school culture results from both conscious and unconscious perspective,

values, interaction and practices and it is heavily shaped by school's particular institutional history. Students, parents, teachers, administrators and other staff members all contribute to their schools culture, as do other influences such as the community in which the school is located the policies that govern how it operates or the principles upon which the school was founded.

Characteristics of Positive School Culture

- ➢ The individual successes of teachers and students are recognized and celebrated.
- ➢ Relationships and interactions are characteristics by openness, trust, respect and appreciation.
- ➢ Staff relationships are collegial, collaborative and productive and all staff members are held to high professional standards.
- ➢ Students and staff members feel emotionally and physical safe and the school's policies and facilities promote student safely.
- ➢ School leaders, teachers and staff members model positive, healthy behaviors for students.
- ➢ Mistakes not punished as failures but they are seen a opportunities to learn and grow for both students and educators.

Culture of School were Characterised by -

- ➢ Seeing differences among students and staff as resources.
- ➢ Organisational features that supported teaming among staff.
- ➢ A collaborative interactional style among staff and children.
- ➢ Leadership that was shared and distributed among formal leaders and staff.
- ➢ A willingness to struggle to sustain inclusive practices.
- ➢ An understanding of the social/political nature of inclusion.
- ➢ The use of language and symbols to communicate ideals and spreads commitments across the school and into the community.
- ➢ An uncompromising commitment and belief in Inclusive education.

The development of Inclusive approaches did not emerge as a mechanical process in which any one specific organizational rest re-structuring or the introduction of a particular instructional practice, generated increased levels of

participation among students.

Culturally Inclusive Schools and learning Environments

➢ The Culture, language and beliefs of each student and family.

➢ All students, staff and community members equally.

➢ All students self esteem and promote respect of others.

➢ A range of perspective and variety of educational experience that students, parents and carers bring to learning.

➢ Consistent fair and high expectations for all students.

➢ Respectful relationships establish school and classrooms rules and practices for respectful behavior and communication which reflect an openness to differing attitude, beliefs and world views.

➢ Collaboration staff work collaboratively as a model to students and the community.

➢ Supportive, prejudice – free, anti discriminatory behavior.

The framework for the action (Salamanca) defines inclusion as a reform that supports and welcomes diversity among all learners. Its aims are to eliminate social exclusion that is consequence of responses to diversity in race, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender and ability. In school throughout the world, 'Inclusion' is often used to refer only to the placement of children with disabilities in ordinary classrooms alongside their peers. School have unique. Organizational cultures that reflect aspects of the societies in which they are found. There are however, also organizational cultures that represent new ideas.

Positive learning experiences increase participation, enhance academic and social skills and increase attendance and retention rate.

➢ The school culture recognizes that the abilities of pupils with special educational needs are not fixed and can be developed and improved given suitable learning experiences.

➢ The school recognizes that pupils with special educational needs have a right to learn and positively acknowledges their efforts and achievements.

➢ Learning is success oriented and equips pupils to manage educational setbacks and develop successful coping skills, setbacks and mistakes are acknowledged and learning through them is encouraged.

➢ Classroom culture fosters positive efforts and promotes the idea of learning as an enjoyable activity.

➢ Pupils with special educational needs agree learning strategies with staff and are involved in setting and monitoring their learning goals.

(National Council for Special Education)

Inclusive Education

The term 'inclusion' has a wider context than the term 'integration'. Integration reflects the attempts to place pupils with special needs in the mainstream in regular education. Several authors (Jordan and Powell 1994; Soder 1989) have pointed out that integration is often seen as re-integration after a period of segregation, or as a means to avoid segregation. Integration then may result in attempts to odapt an existing mainstream curriculum in order to meet the pupils special needs. Integration in its most negative connotation stands for integration by location, whilst providing a watered-down variant of the regular curriculum. The term 'Inclusive Education' stands for an educational system that includes a large diversity of pupils and which differentiales education for this diversity.

(J.W. Meijer, Sip Jan Pijl and Seamus Hegarty 2002)

Inclusive Education differs from the 'integration' or 'mainstreaming' model of education which tended to be concerned principally with disability and special educational needs and learners changing or becoming 'ready for' or deserving of accommodation by the mainstream. By contract, inclusion is about the child's right to participate and the school's duty to accept the child.

Inclusion in education

Ensuring that each individual has an equal opportunity for educational progress remains a challenge worldwide. Sustainable development goal () on education and the education 2030 frame work for action emphasize inclusion and equity as laying the foundations for quality education.

The UNESCO convention against discrimination in education (1960) and other international human rights treaties prohibit any exclusion from, or limitation to, educational opportunities on the basis of Socially-ascribed or perceived differences. Such as by sex ethnic/social origin, language, religion, nationality economics condition, ability. In this context UNESCO promotes inclusive education systems that remove the barriers limiting the participation and achievement of all learners, respect diverse needs, abilities and characteristics and that eliminate all forms of

discrimination in the learning environment. *(https://en.unesco.org)*

"School should accommodate all children regard less of their physical intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions."*(Article 3, Salamanca framework for Action)*

"Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating, welcoming communities, building and inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover; they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improving the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system."*(Article 2, Salamanca statement)(www.unesco.org)*

It is now understood that inclusive education benefits communities families, teachers and students by ensuring that children with disabilities attend school with their peers and providing them with adequate support to succeed both academically and socially.

Mel ainscow, Pefer, Farrell & Dave Tweddle (2000)

Developing policies for inclusive education: A study of the role of local education authorities –

In this research paper focused on how schools and classrooms can be developed in relation to this idea. Few studies have considered the contribution and role of local administrative arrangements to such developments, even though there is evidence that these can be highly influential in relation to policy implementation in general (Spillane1998) Drawing on the evidence of a recent study carried out in England this paper starts to fill this gap.

W. Montgomety (2001) explains in his article how can creating culturally responsive, inclusive classrooms. Culturally responsive classrooms specifically acknowledge the presence of culturally diverse students and the need for these students to find relevant connections among themselves and with the subject matter and the tasks teachers ask them to perform.

Jenny corbel (2010) explores the relationship between concepts of inclusive education and school culture of late 1990 Britain. It begins by estabelishing what the concept of culture might imply within the traditions of British society and the social climate of schooling. Inclusive educational issues concerning pedagogy and curriculum content are related toother setting by drawing examples of inclusive classrooms cultures from the American context.

Nancy J. Zollers, Arun K. Ramanathan & Moonset Yu (1999).

The authors found three underlying characteristics of the schools culture to be related to the success of its inclusion program; an inclusive leader; A broad vision of school community and shared language and value, which they argue combine to create what they term an inclusive school culture. The authors believe that fostering an inclusive culture within a school community can greatly contribute to the success of an inclusion program.

Suzanne Carrington (1999) teachers beliefs and value are affecting the emerging organizational paradigm called inclusive education. A social constuctivist perspective on teachers beliefs acknowledges that teachers have their ideals and this knowledge influences their action in the implementation of inclusive schooling. This happens within a social and cultural context of the school and community. In this research addresses a critical aspect of the changes needed for the development of inclusive schooling and the associated professional development for teachers.

Mel Ainscow & Abha Scindill (2010) including all children in education is the major challenge facing educational systems around the world, in both developing and developed countries. Drawing on research evidence and ideas from a range of international literature argues that leadership practices is a crucial element in gearing education systems towards inclusive value and bringing about sustainable change.

Teacher attitudes toward inclusion

It is anticipated that inclusion will become more prevelent in classrooms over the next ten year as a result of increasingly stringent federal and state mandates.

TA Khan (2011) The author found in this study provide useful indication of the attitudes and knowledge of Bangladeshi teacher for people who are involved in various areas of the educational sector such as teachers, educational administrators and policy makers. This study also identified several issues regarding attitudes and knowledge towards inclusive education.

Previous research (Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005) has argued that teachers attitudes towards inclusive education influence the success of their inclusive classroom.

Nisreen M. Anati (2012) Found in his study participant teachers did emphasize that there is a great need for extra efforts to create a culture of team work. On hand can't clap. They added that the UAE inclusive schools should encourage the effective involvement of special need students, parents, school professional educators and

community stakeholder in the inclusion process. Its only by team work spirit that we will be able to achieve the ultimate goal of the UAE Ministry of Education.

Teachers are critical actors in inclusive education and have a tremendous influence on the quality of education that a child receives. In many cases teachers are under – resourced, working in over – crowded classrooms and lacking the capacity to adequately address the needs of all students. Inclusion requires sufficient numbers of teachers who are adequately prepared and trained. Teachers should receive support to make possible inclusive approaches with specialist teaching support where necessary.

Conclusion

Schools offer a dynamic, productive space where ideas, values, information, knowledge are shared and conveyed. Organization of the class and interactions amongst its fundamental components is the student teachers and curriculum – transaction. Create potential for the group to move from a state of not knowing to one of knowing.

This review has show a consistent and positive correlation between the culture of school and the impact that culture has on the implemention of program, such as inclusion.

Culture is created through individuals perceptions, feelings and beliefs these perceptions feeling and beliefs can have a negative or positive impact on the culture of a group or community. One schools culture has an impact on how the institution operates. A great deal of the accountability regarding special educational services has shifted to individual school site.

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