

Values Necessary for Social Inclusion: A Study of Values needed by Children with Special Needs for Mainstreaming

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ABSTRACT: Inclusive education supports the end of exclusion. Friedman states that 'Inclusion is a philosophy that embraces the idea that everyone has something of value to contribute and that everyone has a right to belong.' Children with special needs are often disproportionately excluded from school (WHO-World Report, 2011). The Millennium Development Goals (2000) has mandated that every child has the right to primary education. Attending the local mainstream school is an equitable option for children with disability as special schools are often not affordable or appropriate. Children with disabilities especially those with intellectual disability are often excluded owing to deficits in social skills and inability to behave in accordance with socially accepted values (Sujathamalini, 2011). They have significant limitations in intellectual functioning and concurrent limitations in adaptive behavior. They also lack the context to learn values and have difficulty in adjusting to social norms, showing deviant and delinquent behavior (Charles and Selvi, 2011). The present paper makes an attempt to understand the importance of learning human values like self care and cleanliness, team spirit and good manners in promoting true inclusion. As Stephen R. Covey states "Strength lies in differences not in similarities".

Research Methodology: survey study was conducted using a closed ended questionnaire on a sample of 100 educators from in and around Coimbatore.

Findings: The quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed results indicate a strong need to imbibe basic values in children with special needs especially intellectually disabled in order to promote true inclusion.

Key Words: Inclusion, Values, Children with Special Needs, Children with Intellectual Disability

Introduction

Meaning and Concept and Inclusion

Inclusion is an approach which supports education for all. The right of all children to develop to their maximum potential is inherent in the philosophy of democracy. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) focused special attention on the education of Children with Disabilities (CwDs) in regular schools for achieving the goal of Education for All (Selvi, 2011). Special educational services are now giving way to inclusion and inclusive approaches. Special education is referred to as a tailor made educational strategies, materials and methods to meet the unique needs of children with special needs (CWSN). Hence it is an approach to meet the needs of children having

special educational needs. Over the years, special education has passed through five evolutionary stages: stage of neglect, stage of pity and compassion, stage of special school, stage of integration and mainstreaming. Special needs is further defined as a restriction in the capacity of an individual to participate in and benefit from education or general activities on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability, or any other condition which makes participation in daily life including education different and unique compared to a person without that condition (EPSEN Act, 2004). Research studies done in the past have demonstrated that inclusion of CWSN in general education classrooms results in positive and

favorable responses. Inclusion means to include all and inclusive education is defined as a learning environment that promotes full personal, academic and professional development of all learners irrespective of race, class, color, gender, disability, learning styles and language (NCSNET, South Africa, 1997). Inclusive education welcomes all students in age appropriate classrooms their neighborhood schools and are supported to contribute and participate in all aspects of daily life and education.

Concept and meaning of Values

The origin of the term 'Values' lies in the Latin word *Valerie* meaning strong and vigorous. Etymologically values mean the 'worth of something' while generally they mean the guiding principles that shape our world outlook, attitudes and conduct. Values are taught as well as caught (Rani, 2010). These act as guidelines and principles for socially acceptable human behavior. According to Mukherjee, (1987) values are socially approved desires and goals that are internalized through the process of learning, conditioning or socialization and that become subjective preferences or standards and aspirations. Values are considered abstract hence has different meanings for different individuals. Kane (1962) writes values as ideals, beliefs or norms which a society holds desirable and beneficial for the overall efficient and effective functioning. They are also viewed as norms specifying how individuals should behave (David, 1964). The Indian philosophies such as the Sankhya considers values are the soul ideals for *Viveka* (discrimination), *Janana* (knowledge) and *Mukti* (salvation) (Rani, 2010). Values are either innate (inborn divine virtues) or acquired (as a result of conditioning, training and socialization). Swami Vivekananda has said: 'Religion is realization, not talk, doctrines, or theories, Religion is being and becoming, not hearing and acknowledging. Hence religion is realization and practice of values (CW). Sri Sarada Devi says that the only difference between man and animals is that man has values such as forbearance (*ksama*), Fortitude (*dhrti*), non-covetousness (*asteya*), cleanliness (*sauca*), self control (*indriya-nigraha*) and true knowledge is the knowledge which liberates (*sa vidya ya vimuktaye*) (Sw. Atmasthanananda, 2002).

There are various types of values:

- Personal values
- Social values
- Moral values
- Behavioral values
- Universal values
- Intellectual values
- Physical values
- Aesthetic values

Understanding the characteristics of Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs (CWSN) have various needs such in areas: behavioral, physical, social, emotional or developmental owing to various impairments and disabilities, thus affecting their ability to function and participate in important educational and social activities. Majority of CWSN have disabilities which interfere with their social life, education mandating the need for special educational services. For many students such conditions go unrecognized and unaddressed thus increasing their sense of segregation from normal society (Hughes, 2015). They often receive restricted environments with limited resources and care. According to the US department of Education (USDOE, 1996), special services must be offered to the students who meet the criteria for the disability categories, which is generally around 8% of the younger population in schools. Research findings reveal the various contextual factors such as teachers attitude, problems – cognitive, social, emotional and physical which will influence children with special needs. These children experience many barriers in mobility and other areas. Several existing barriers also hamper the provision of adequate education to students with special needs in mainstream primary schools. Special educational needs of a child may or may not be recognized (Veen & Derriks, 2010).

Need of the study

Children need to be taught values like humility, honesty, good manners, caring, team work for facilitating better adjustment and acceptance. According to Cohen, concrete learning is a powerful tool and the curriculum needs to be integrated with various opportunities. The curriculum should focus

on teaching important values to the children which will lead to better adjustment, acceptance and inclusion. Social acceptance is imperative for all and true inclusion is therefore the need of the hour (Sushant). Various values imparted through value oriented education can help achieve such a state (Swami Purushottamananda, 2013). Kumta (2012) reports about the efforts made by NCERT and CBSE in re-introducing VE into the general curriculum through setting up of NRCVE in 2000, national program for strengthening value education, 2002, to generate awareness, material development, teacher training, research promotion and innovations in education of human values. CBSE has started Life Skills for classes VI, VII in 2003 and 2005 which has been extended up to class X, VBIL has been started where every lesson is linked to some value, schools need to devote at least 2 periods per week to life skills development. In india, though values are secular such as peace, honesty, truth, responsibility, compassion, yet most value education programs are initiated by religious organizations like sathya sai, brahmakumaris, RKM, art of living, Chinmaya mission, and many others. Schools label VE as personality development, life skills training. Lack of proper organized and structured curriculum, lack of trained teachers, use of designated period to teach other subjects, are unaware of resource materials available

Objectives of the study

- To understand the meaning and need of values.
- To study the values needed by CWSN to promote better inclusion.
- To understand some common methods and practices in inclusive settings to develop values in CWSN.

Results and Findings

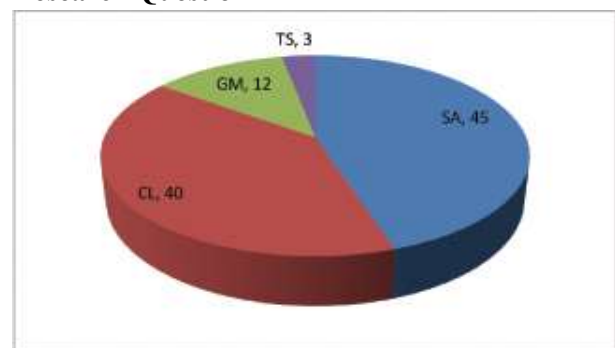
Research Questions

1. What is the meaning of values and nature of values?
2. Which values help to promote better inclusion among CWSN?
3. What are the common methods and practices used in inclusive settings to develop values in CWSN?

Research Question-1

Values are abstract concepts. Each society has customs and traditions that change over time but certain basic values such as honesty, truthfulness, respect, care do not change (Alpoge, 2010). CWSN need training in values which will help them to adjust better by performing suitable, needed behaviors and actions, helping in total inclusion, NCERT Value education frameworks has suggested 81 values and in the present study we study about some selected values which are identified and prioritized for CWSN (Guha & Susdha, 2016)..

Research Question-2



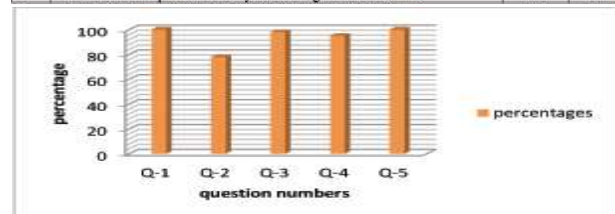
(SA = Self Awareness, CL = Cleanliness, GM = Good Manners, TS = Team Spirit)

Figure 1: Values preferred by the respondents for CWSN to support inclusion

As seen in figure-1, it is seen that 45% respondents (n=45) selected cleanliness as a major value needed for successful inclusion. 40% (n=40) respondents stated good manners is needed for mainstreaming of CWSN and 15% respondents agreed that team spirit is an important value to promote inclusion.

Table 1: Opinion of respondents towards essential values for inclusion

S.N.	Statements	n (yes)	(%)
1	Values can be taught as well as caught	100	100
2	CWSN need to learn certain values which will promote inclusion	78	78
3	CWSN can be taught values through moral stories using story telling method	98	98
4	CWSN can learn values through morning assembly	95	95
5	CWSN can be imparted values by celebrating national festivals	100	100



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Figure 2: shows the graphical representation of the respondents towards the questions.

The responses about values for inclusion for CWSN was gauged as stated below:

The findings depicted in figure-1 and above table show that 45% respondents opined about cleanliness being one of the major values which promote CWSN to study in the same classroom along with other children. 'Cleanliness is next to godliness'. Personal cleanliness should be given a lot of importance. Children with and without disabilities should be taught the value of self awareness, cleanliness, among others.

Self awareness deals with knowing ourselves by:

- Knowing and responding to self name
- Making choices
- Knowing and differentiating between strangers and known

- Interest, hobbies
- Self esteem
- Emotional control
- Self care and respect

Maintaining personal cleanliness by developing the following basic clean habits:

- Daily bath
- Cutting and trimming nails
- Wearing clean clothes
- Washing hands before and after using toilet
- Using the toilet properly such as flushing after use
- Using handkerchief while sneezing, wiping nose

While 40% supported good manners as being one of the important values for inclusion. Good manners- 'manners maketh man'. Manners and behaviors act as mirrors. Swami Vivekananda stresses on the need for having force of character imbibed with noble thoughts and spiritual sublimity. Good manners generally refer to having polite, humble, courteous, respectful and well cultured social behavior. Having good manners means acting in a way which is considered socially acceptable and respectful. All children should be taught good manners so that they

become good citizens. Teaching good manners increases social awareness, and respect for others. Good manners are important as they earn us respect and good name (Rani, 2010). Children with and without disabilities should be taught the following good manners:

- Talking politely
- Respecting elders and peers
- Caring for others
- Sharing things with others
- Following safety rules

Team spirit: according to Collins Dictionary team spirit is defined as the feeling of camaraderie among the members of a group, enabling them to cooperate and work well together. There is a feeling of pride and loyalty among members of the team which makes them want their team to do well. 15 % of respondents supported team spirit in the present study. The value of team spirit further teaches children other values such as:

- sharing,
- caring,
- cooperation,
- keeping team before self
- feeling happy when team wins
- feeling of responsibility towards team
- respecting team members

Research Question-3

From the responses received it is understood that some activities practiced in inclusive school settings promote value development among children with special needs through indirect and direct methods which include the following: such as:

1. Cleanliness drives: the child develops the value of cleanliness. Participation in cleanliness drives such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, which teaches the values like hard work, cooperation, team spirit and aesthetic values.

2. Good manners: is transacted through teaching of good habits such as punctuality, regularity. The child is made to come on time to class so that he/she develops a sense of routine.

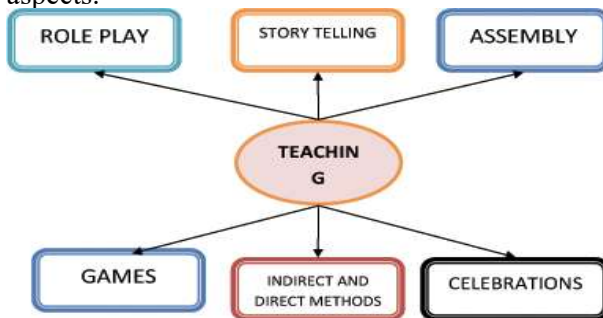
3. Celebration of birthdays of national leaders and important festivals: teaches about

good values like cultural values, sharing, happiness, caring for others.

4. Indirect Instruction: it is student centered and very effective for imparting values, morals in order to achieve the objective of understanding and long term retention of concepts leading to generalization. It includes methods such as: storytelling, inquiry, critical examination. It is seen that values are best imparted through indirect instructions, hence in the present study the researcher has developed a value education curriculum which employs various indirect and experiential instructional strategies to transact values to pupils with mild intellectual disability.

5. Story telling: it is used under indirect instructional method. It is an oral tradition which helps to document and teach values, cultural traditions, spiritual beliefs and philosophy. The instructor has to be familiar with the story, visualize it in the mind and present it in words using props. In case study approach a story is told about a specific scenario and teaches how to deal with specific aspects of the situation as well as its diverse perspectives.

6. Role Play/Simulations/Games: This strategy is a part of experiential learning method which is a learner centered, inductive, activity oriented process. Focus is given on reflecting on an experience thus helping the individual to plan and apply learning to other contexts. These help to motivate learners and develop their analytical processes. It increases the student's ability to apply principles and help individuals understand their current roles. And it also helps to sensitize individuals to another person's life. These methods allow the pupils to see, identify, recognize and discuss their feelings before analyzing the cognitive aspects.



Discussion

Schools having Inclusive classrooms are actively seeking ways and methods to train teachers and equip the classrooms with disabled friendly infrastructure. Values help us to lead our lives in a good and responsible way as values give direction to our lives, explaining to us how to behave in certain situations and why. Having good values makes us adjust in the social system because we tend to behave in a socially acceptable manner which helps us garner respect. Social inclusion depends on three factors: acceptance, adjustment, and attitude. Effective adjustment needs charge of one's own life. Children with special needs (CWS) often lack the context to learn values and also due to impaired physical, mental or emotional health, they often need to be taught values instead of simply catching them. The present study reveals that values such as awareness about self, cleanliness, good manners, team spirit help to promote better adjustment and thus facilitate full inclusion and more acceptance among peers and community members. Values are abstract concepts (Alpoge, 2015) and cannot be easily learnt by trial and error (Rani, 2010) hence difficult for Children with special needs to understand them, follow them and apply them in daily living. Value education starts at home and parents act as role models. Typically developing children start to internalize values at an early age. They can observe parents, understand social situations and gain knowledge through inferential learning which is difficult for CWSN, who often even lack learning contexts.

Conclusion

The Education commission (1964-66) states that "great importance is attached to the role of indirect influence in building up good character. The school

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atmosphere, personality and behavior of teachers, facilities all help in developing the sense of values. The consciousness of a value permeates the whole curriculum. Teachers, parents and community are all responsible for teaching values through games, team sports, curricular and co-curricular activities. Such planned experiences should help the child to inculcate values such as high self esteem, good manners, respect towards elders, cooperation among others' (as cited in Guha & Sudha, 2016). The present study sheds light on the meaning and importance of values, some methods for imparting values and the need for value learning for promoting inclusion for children with special needs.

“We need man-making, character building and nation building education”

-Swami Vivekananda

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