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Pedagogical Practices: A Promising Approach to Empower Diverse Learners in Inclusive Setup


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Abstract

Inclusive education has grown into a worldwide process of educating all students, confirming a commitment to universal guidelines and values of inclusiveness and diversity. It involves recognizing and eliminating roadblocks that limits students, especially disadvantaged ones, from participating and flourishing in their endeavors. More importantly, the complexities of diversity concerns have improved as the concept of inclusive education has shifted its emphasis from facilitating children with disabilities towards educating all students. Inclusive pedagogy serves EVERY learner with individual differences, engaging everyone despite their socioeconomic status, capacities, native tongue, cultural background, religion, gender, racial background, disabilities etc. promotes their worth, egalitarianism, and equity for everyone. It supports and values everyone who participates in a classroom and acknowledges that we all learn from one another even the teacher, who can learn from the students. Inclusive pedagogy welcomes various cultures, creates suitable atmospheres for the interaction of diverse opinions, and assigns different tasks that require students to reflect thoughtfully regarding equitable and multicultural issues. Government initiatives and policy serves as the best practices for the nation. As beautifully quoted by Kothari Commission (1964-66), 'Destiny of a nation is shaped in its classroom'. Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) in 2004, students of differently-able are to be enlightened in an atmosphere that is least restrictive (LRE) alongside classmates without special needs in the nearby schools to fullest extent with appropriate measures in educational system. Certain Pedagogical Practices can be employed in the classroom instead of just teaching syllabus through talk-chalk method to cater the needs of everyone in order to develop them fully so that they ALL can become future contributors of the society, nation and world. A promising approach with utmost dedication towards these future generations has to be implemented religiously by mentors every day in the classroom to uplift them, energized them towards their own goals by not following the traditional approach 'One Size Fits All'.

Keywords: Diverse Learners, Inclusive Pedagogy, Least Restrictive Environment, Educating All

Introduction

In recent times, including every learner with diverse learning needs and background in education sector has emerged as paradigm shift in the society as whole. Everyone should be sensible towards these differently-able students and certain thoughtful efforts are being framed to accept, respect and welcome these diverse learners with mainstream students so that they are not treated as marginalized groups. It is apparent that learners who have limitations and members of other underprivileged groups aren't accommodated equally within classrooms and receive inadequate educational possibilities that cater to their specific requirements. The major concern to include and accept them in mainstream classroom is inadequate knowledge,

unacceptable frame of mind and improper training towards dealing with diverse learners under one same roof ([Sharma & Singh, 2022](#)). This roof is also known as Inclusive Education. Another factor unfavorable to progress is the non-recognition of the essential heterogeneity of a collection of children. If they appear like different today from one another, they will appear unlike even tomorrow ([Ballard, 1914](#)). This is Almighty boon for everyone to be unique and special which forms diversity. Diversity means to the entirety that people are unique and varied, i.e. the distinctions and variances noticed amongst humans ([Bhatia, 2021](#)). Inclusive pedagogy serves Every learner with individual differences, engaging everyone despite their socioeconomic status, capacities, native tongue, cultural background, religion, gender, racial background, disabilities etc. promotes their worth, egalitarianism, and equity for everyone. The approach should be educating students that would prepare them ‘for life itself and throughout existence’ ([Bhatia & Rinkey, 2021](#); [Van Gorp, 2006](#)). The core values seemed always revolutionary and applicable for learners as well as teachers, because they were built on the idea that a community of people needs to be able to readily adjust to dynamic situations in society, rather than ideological or societal beliefs from earlier times.

Inclusive Education

The term ‘inclusive education’ is often confused with targeting excluded portion of societies or children, but the true meaning of the approach would be that it ‘welcomes variety’, benefits all students, provides equitable opportunity for education, and makes feasible plans for groups to participate without marginalizing them. It involves recognizing and eliminating roadblocks that limits students, especially disadvantaged ones, from participating and flourishing in their endeavors ([Massouti et al., 2023](#)). Including Special Education Needs students in regular schools is not accommodating them but certain suitable modifications need to be made so they can learn with their peers who don’t have any type of barrier in inclusive settings. It supports and values everyone who participates in a classroom and acknowledges that we all learn from one another even the teacher, who can learn from the students.

Inclusive pedagogy welcomes various cultures, creates atmospheres conducive to the interaction of diverse opinions, and assigns different tasks that require students to reflect thoughtfully regarding equitable and multicultural issues ([Borthwick-Duffy et al., 1996](#)). The current educational structure enables everyone, young and old, with or without disabilities, to learn collectively in an appropriate scenario. According to the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) enforced in 1975 and amended and changed its name Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) in 2004, students of differently-able are to be enlightened in an atmosphere that is least restrictive (LRE) alongside classmates without special needs in the nearby schools to fullest extent with appropriate measures in educational system ([Baker et al., 1994](#); [Daunarummo, 2010](#); [Rizzo & Lavay, 2000](#)). It also says that everyone in the system, including pupils, parents, members of the community, professionals in education, and lawmakers, should be welcoming of diversification and discover it as an opportunity instead of a cause for concern ([Singh et al., 2020](#)).

Research Questions

- To identify the key principles and strategies advocated in the article for fostering inclusivity and supporting the diverse learning needs of students in context of NEP-2020.
- To critically analyze the pedagogical practices highlighted in the article and their potential impact on empowering diverse learners within inclusive educational settings.

Key Principles of Inclusivity

- All pupils are accepted with welcoming arms at the school.
- The students establish an integrated unit, encouraging fellow learners in their education.
- The teachers act as a shield of protection, ensuring every student is well-supported on the educational journey.
- Both educators and parents work together in order to improve the academic achievement of pupils.
- The school community recognizes each child like a sparkling gem.

- All pupils are encouraged to progress in every learning experience.
- Each student enjoys learning the atmosphere of a symphony.
- Students are permitted to use the entire school facilities.
- The splendor of individuality flourishes when each student accomplishes his or her educational objectives with a special radiance.
- Learners celebrate diversity every time they grow together

Literature Review

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines 'inclusive education' as (a) a right to education; (b) a principle that honours the well-being of learners, self-worth, self-determination, and role in society; (c) an ongoing endeavour that eradicates hurdles to education and support transformation in the culture, policies, and practices of educational institutions in order to accommodate every learner. The concept of inclusive education has given a lot of thought to the inequalities that exist between individuals. It not only enrolls children with special needs in mainstream education, but it also accepts their various abilities, appreciates their distinct personalities, and fosters avenues for them to engage fully in all facets of schooling so that these children have the opportunity to reach their maximum potential and serve the society at their best. We recognize the Statement of Salamanca, which asserts that inclusive education is 'an approach and process that acknowledges the urgency for progress toward schools for everyone that appreciate differences, promote educational achievement, and are responsive to every one's necessity'. The idea of inclusion lends us an inspiration for welcoming every child. But it was particularly crucial to think about children that were potentially on the brink of being left out of school. A prosperous and equitable nation deserves strategically motivated teachers. Education systems must create diverse, ranging equitable atmospheres for learning that achieve both of these objectives (Tomlinson, 1999). These classrooms promote accomplishment by optimizing potential learners through challenging educational materials and instruction. Inclusive education is an approach

designed of addressing the educational needs of everyone in the classroom by using methodologies for instruction which assist them to participate and play pride in the schools and communities where they live and that fulfill their specific academic requirements (Carrington et al., 2012; Chhetri, 2015; Florian, 2014; Muwana & Ostrosky, 2014). Effective teaching is described as 'pedagogical practices which ensure students from different backgrounds receive knowledge readily available and participate in instructional tasks and projects in ways that facilitate how they learn in connection with the intended objectives of the curriculum' (Alton-Lee & Nuthall, 1998). The broader emphasis on pedagogy promises a broad consideration of the variety of ways in which high-quality instruction is achieved, such as through culturally welcoming and methodically effective task layout, dealing with access to resources for different learners, empowering students with competencies in self-regulation, and educating learners in specific peer teaching strategies. A lot of the time, the term 'teaching' has contributed to a limited focus on the interaction between instructor and student. Without a thought of doubt, teacher-student interactions play a great significance in students' lives. However, the interaction between the teacher and students is likely only the leading edge of the iceberg. A teacher's skillful and cumulative pedagogical actions in constructing and enhancing a successful atmosphere for learning contribute to outstanding results among diverse groups of students (Alton-Lee, 2003). The utmost prime drivers for establishing effective system of inclusive education depend upon dedicated and collective efforts of educators, family and members of community. Positive perspective is prerequisite for successful execution for welcoming educational system. The overall mindset of teachers is among the most important determining factor for the proper execution of an inclusive strategy in the educational setting (Sharma et al., 2008; Singh et al., 2020). Schools nowadays have grown progressively diverse. Many educationists discover that their teaching environments are filled with different language learners, exceptional learners, students with disorders, and socioeconomically different pupils. Several international policies, such as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals

and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, have urged nations to take steps to make changes in their educational systems that better accommodate the educational requirements of individuals' limitations. Government initiatives and policy serves as the best practices for the nation. National Education Policy-2020 under the chairmanship of Dr. Kasturirangan is a historic and remarkable initiatives to provide quality-based education to every learner of primary, secondary, higher, teachers, and adults through holistic and inclusive framework of education having addressed five pillars:



Figure 1 Five Pillars of NEP-2020 Source

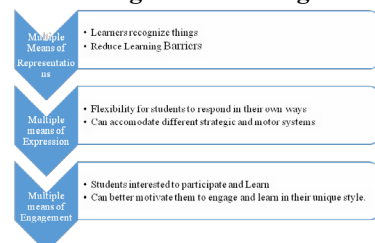
The three pillars Access, Equity, Quality are discussed and addressed by certain national policies; centrally sponsored schemes; commissions but Affordability and Accountability were neglected on ground floor. We as Educators, Parents, Society, and Government have to take accountability of not educating the child according to its abilities, capacities and its needs. As beautifully quoted by Kothari Commission (1964-66), 'Destiny of a nation is shaped in its classroom' (Kothari, 1970). A promising approach with utmost dedication towards these future generations has to be implemented religiously by mentors everyday in the classroom to uplift them, energized them towards their own goals by not following the traditional approach 'One Size Fits All'. Classrooms are learning temples. Classrooms, homes, communities, and environments develop individuals. They open up an individual's potential and uncover accomplishments. Certain Pedagogical Practices can be employed in the classroom instead of just teaching syllabus through talk-chalk method to cater the needs of everyone in order to develop them fully so that they all can become future contributors of the society, nation and world specifically future educators in the study showed positive perspective towards inclusive education (Bhatia & Kaur, 2024).

Significance of the Study

Individualized Instruction: This method of instruction realizes that students possess unique preferences for learning and styles. Teachers embrace these divergent views by implementing numerous avenues for learning, which include the use of a range of educational resources, the integration of the latest technology, and the provision of varying levels of encouragement or difficulty depending upon the requirements of each student. It supports 'One Size Does Not Fits All.' Diversified instruction incorporates ensuring the availability of a variety of pathways to learning for learners of a wide range of abilities (Tomlinson, 1999).

Universal Design for Learning is a paradigm designed at rendering education approachable for every learner through taking steps to create learning materials and curricula that can be easily obtained, acknowledged, and utilized by a broad variety of learners. According to 'Universal layout suggests a structure of educational tools resources and activities which enables educational objectives to be feasible by learners who have broader variances in their capacity regarding their ability to sense, communicate, move, comprehend written material, grasp knowledge, participate, manage, interact, and recall their learning experiences inside and outside the classroom'. It encompasses providing youngsters plenty of opportunities for demonstrating what they know, act out what they know, and converse about what they know. Representation of learning should be auditory, visual, tactile, kinesthetic and mixture of ways in order to cater the needs of the diverse students in the classroom.

Figure 2 Three Essential Qualities of Universal Design for Learning



Source: Centre for Applied Special Technology

Culturally adaptable instruction focuses on individuals' backgrounds, perspectives, and

experiences. It is about including indigenous resources, explanations, and standpoints in the course of study, building an upbeat supportive classroom environment, and connecting students' lives to what is being discussed in the classroom. Throughout the discussion, pupils require lots of chances to apply the learning in real life scenario (Voltz et al., 2010).

Multidisciplinary Instruction: Students work together. Students engage in pairs or small teams on assignments forums, and dealing with issues. Collaboration in education encourages multiple students to share thoughts, opinions, and encounters, improving knowledge analytical abilities, and interpersonal abilities.

Scaffolding: Instruction that is scaffold means giving students a short time help and direction when they start to learn new skills or information. Teachers facilitate students, but as they climb the ladder and become self-sufficient, they help them where it is required. To help different types of learners reach their learning goals, scaffolding can involve reducing down difficult tasks into smaller steps, providing examples, hints and cues in order to make them walk on the path of learning and participating in various tasks.

Peer tutoring: Peer tutoring enables students to study together. It entails pairing or merging students with various levels of understanding and abilities, and one person represents the instructor (the one with more expertise) and another being pupil (the one requesting support). Peer tutoring strives to boost learning through collaborative learning and instruction. The Great Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky's 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD) theory suggests that young people may reap advantages from learning from peers who already

have the necessary expertise and experience. They can build trust, connections, and understanding for enhanced instruction. Peer tutoring has a major role in not just helping in explaining the concepts but additionally in reinforcing, modelling, monitoring and boosting up their confidence.

Personalized learning: It is a way of teaching that focuses on making lessons meets the needs, interests, and skills of each student. It includes using technologies, information, and periodic evaluations to figure out each student's learning background and develop educational activities that cater to their individual needs. Personalized learning includes note how various students need different ways to learn and grow in school.

Multisensory teaching: Multisensory classroom instruction is a teaching technique that employs more than one sense simultaneously for better learning and retention power. It acknowledges that everybody have various learning habits and choices and through the use of multiple sensory experiences, teachers are able to accommodate a wider range of students. Visual, auditory, kinesthetic (tactile), and sometimes olfactory and gustatory are the most common senses used in multisensory instruction.

Assistive Technology: Assistive technology includes tools and applications allowing individuals with challenges to carry out tasks more smoothly, productively, and self-sufficiently instead of what would normally be practicable. The majority of people consider that the term 'assistive technology' simply refers to computer systems, but in fact, the term has been used for a long time to describe equipment like adaptive feeding tools, mobility devices, and vision aids that help people with disabilities.

Table 1 Analysis Crux of Pedagogical Practices in Inclusive Setup to Meet Diverse Needs

Pedagogical Practice	Meaning	Major Advantages	Target Learners	Challenges
Individualized Instruction	Individualized Instruction means becoming flexible with your pedagogy and the subject matter you teach to cater to the unique educational objectives, pursuits, and levels of aptitude of every student.	Personalized Learning Experience	Students with varying abilities and learning styles in mixed-ability classrooms	Time-consuming for teachers
		Higher student engagement		Sufficient resources and training required
		Improved academic performance		Ensuring fair and equitable assessment

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)	UDL is an approach that aims to create accessible learning environments and materials that cater to a wide range of learners, including those with disabilities.	Increased accessibility of learning materials	All learners, including those with disabilities	Initial design and implementation challenges
		Promotes inclusive practices		Need for ongoing refinement and updates
		Reduces barriers to learning		
Collaborative Learning	Collaborative Learning encourages students to work together on tasks, projects, and discussions, fostering cooperation and mutual learning.	Enhanced teamwork and communication skills	Students from diverse backgrounds	Potential unequal participation
		Improved critical thinking and problem-solving		Addressing conflicts and group dynamics
		Increased empathy and social awareness		
Culturally Responsive Teaching	This practice involves recognizing and valuing students' diverse cultural backgrounds and integrating culturally relevant content and teaching strategies.	Creates a supportive and inclusive classroom	Culturally and linguistically diverse learners	Understanding individual cultural backgrounds
		Boosts self-esteem and motivation		Avoiding stereotypes and cultural biases
		Bridges home and school cultures		
Assistive Technology	Assistive Technology refers to tools and devices that assist learners with disabilities in accessing information, participating, and learning effectively.	Facilitates active participation	Learners with disabilities	1. Training for educators and students
		Enables independent learning		Accessibility and affordability of technology
		Enhances overall learning experiences		
Personalized Learning Plans	Personalized Learning Plans involve tailoring individual learning objectives, pathways, and assessments based on each student's strengths and weaknesses.	Customized learning experiences	All students, regardless of their abilities	Monitoring and adjusting plans regularly
		Higher student motivation and ownership		Balancing personalized and standardized learning
		Addresses individual learning gaps		
Flexible Assessment Strategies	Flexible Assessment Strategies allow students to demonstrate their learning in various ways, considering their unique strengths and preferences.	Diverse ways of showcasing knowledge and skills	All learners	Aligning with curriculum and learning objectives
		Reduced anxiety and stress during assessments		Ensuring fairness and consistency in grading
		Encourages reflective learning		

Conclusion

In order to address the educational disparity among disadvantaged children, it is absolutely essential that educators recognise the significance of inclusion and adopt strategies to enhance the skills and individual growth of every student learning in the same setting of educational experiences. This involves enhancing the efficiency of educational systems, preparing educators, and fostering participation in society. Children who are disabled or have other disadvantages have inner goals for their prospects in life, similar to children who are not disabled or facing any other disadvantages. These children require high-quality schooling to cultivate their abilities, realise their full potential, and contribute to society's overall growth. It is possible to modify substance by grappling with and analysing it through the adoption of fresh viewpoints. In the field of social research, there is an urgent need to evolve beyond the idea of impartiality, which promotes compliance to the prevailing ideology of society. Furthermore, within school, instructors ought to take on a position of community intellectuals who collaborate with students and their families in transforming realities through introspection and interaction. Eventually eventually, the nature of educational activities needs to be revamped and rebuilt so that it takes seriously the standpoints of the individuals who are at the maximum disadvantage.

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