



Special and Inclusive Education: Perspectives, Challenges and Prospects

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Abstract:

Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities promotes an inclusive vision, but in practise, this vision is not fully realised in education systems across the globe. First, there is a dearth of data supporting the advantages of inclusive education over conventional special education services, but the leadership of important senior academics in the area of special education has been criticised for pushing a vision of full inclusion instead. Many advocates of inclusion have been critical of special education in the 20th century for its failure to meet the needs of students with disabilities, but this failure has roots in a long and complicated history. They argue that special education is problematic because it necessitates the identification, labelling, and categorization of students. Finally, educators have been urged to consider an education system without boundaries, one in which all students with special needs are integrated into regular classrooms. This is due to the expectation that, in the future, general education classrooms would become so adaptable that they will be able to accommodate children with impairments of any kind and degree. The fourth problem is that determining a student's educational placement is inherently subjective, and hence prone to mistake because of the inherent fallibility of human judgement. Fifth, many advocates of complete inclusion have failed to take into account the real-world ramifications of their ideals, yet such consideration is essential for educators committed to inclusion. Finally, inclusion in the sense that students are present in general education classes is not as valued as inclusion in the sense that they are really participating in a programme of instruction that is both relevant and difficult. Therefore, we believe that special education should not be phased out but rather further refined, widely distributed, and strictly administered in classrooms. To effectively educate all students with special educational needs and disabilities, it is necessary to combine key ideas and approaches from both special education and inclusive education.

Keywords: disability; special education; inclusion; inclusive education

Inclusive Vision versus Special Education Reality General Comment No.4 to Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) urged all nations to adopt fully inclusive education systems without delay. One reason for this was the contentious claim made in General Comment 4 that special education students in mainstream classrooms learn more than their disabled peers in integrated ones. The future of special education provision and the consequences of shifting to and managing single inclusive school systems are both crucial considerations in light of this unfounded assertion. This is because UNCRPD Article 24's policy direction heralds the end of special education as we know it. While some have predicted special education's death, new data from a worldwide study provided in the Global Education Monitoring Report on Inclusive Education show such claims may be overblown. According to the data collected for the paper, just 5% of nations prioritise segregation, whereas 45% prioritise partial segregation, 12% prioritise integration, and 38% prioritise inclusion. As the research goes on to indicate, 25% of nations have laws that explicitly promote segregation, 48% have laws that partially promote segregation, 10% have laws that promote integration, and 17% have laws that promote inclusion. Because of this, it is evident that the global



picture is one in which the great majority of nations continue to use either partly segregated or entirely separated special education facilities to accommodate a high percentage of their children with special educational needs and disabilities. This is not in line with the UNCRPD's goal of universal access to education for all people. Despite the fact that most countries have adopted UNCRPD Article 24, it seems that only a small percentage of young people with special educational needs and disabilities are taught in fully inclusive schools. The question then becomes how we got to a point where one UN body promotes an inclusive vision while another reports a far smaller degree of inclusion in educational institutions throughout the globe. We argue that this gap has several causes, and we detail them below

Misguided Leadership of Key Senior Academics in the Field of Special Education

Some prominent senior academics in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia who study and work with children who have special educational needs and disabilities seem to have lost contact with practitioners and parents during the previous four decades. In addition, they haven't given nearly enough attention to new findings on what makes an education for students with special needs and disabilities successful during the last several years. Years of unfair criticism from within our profession and from outsiders, purposeful deconstruction, and impractical suggestions for change have been said to have damaged good will toward special education [7]. (p. 70). All children, without exception, must be taught in regular school classes alongside their age peers. This concept of complete inclusion has been advocated by certain prominent academics in significant positions in the area of special education and is now typically characterised by the expression, All Means All. Despite widespread reports of teachers' and parents' concerns and a lack of scientific evidence regarding the benefits of inclusive education for certain children over conventional special education services and placements, this policy guidance has been advocated. As time has gone on, these high-ranking educators have remained committed to a vision of total inclusion despite mounting evidence to the contrary. We explore each of the potential causes in turn. First, it has been simpler, and hence more alluring, to advocate for a clear and simple notion to convey the complicated subject of how to offer optimal education for children with a broad variety of special educational needs and impairments. The concept of "full inclusion" is straightforward and simple: it means that all children are taught in regular classes with other children their own age, without any exceptions. This policy may thus be easily advocated for and disseminated. But there's a big catch, as pointed out by a famous adage credited to H. L. Menken: A easy, clean, and incorrect answer exists for every difficult situation. After considering human rights and moral rights, it became clear that the extremely simplified vision of full inclusion offered by prominent senior academics in the area of special education was founded primarily on a human rights argument that was both naïve and wrong. Careful examination of the idea, policy, research, and practise of full inclusion reveals its flaws and unrealism, as detailed in an essay titled "inclusion or illusion, does one size suit all?" For almost 40 years, scholars in prominent positions in the area of special education have ignored the many critiques of the inclusive education model that have been published in the academic literature and in open discussion, instead choosing to promote the model's simple vision of complete inclusion. Secondly, once full inclusion was established as the gold standard for the education of all children with special educational needs and disabilities by senior academic leaders, it became much easier for other scholars, researchers, and practitioners in the field to support it rather than criticise it.



On Limitlessness, Rejection of Current Wisdom, and Futures

Better sales may be expected from an unlimited product than from a restricted one. Strength, novelty, adaptability, and appeal are all qualities linked with boundless potential. It's illustrative of a boundless potential for growth and innovation. Those that are limited are stereotyped as being elderly, out of touch, frail, and clumsy. It points to a future when nothing new or interesting will happen. Many people believe that the social sciences may achieve the same mind-boggling limitations or apparent limitlessness as the natural sciences. For instance, they advocate for radical reforms in schools to which at least some arbitrary restrictions do not apply. What's crucial here is remembering that irrationality has no bounds but reason does. Stupidity has no bounds. The irony of this fact has not been lost on physicists, who have poked fun at the concept of limitlessness with jokes like "Speed Limit: 186,000 miles per second." IN FACT, IT IS THE LAW! Many people are fooled into accepting nonsensical ideas because they give the appearance of being novel and boundless, as other scientists have pointed out. Critics in the fields of philosophy and literary studies have also taken issue with the concept of limitless nonsense. Educators, especially special educators, have gotten in on the "limitless craze," putting forward ideas that sound appealing and doable at first. Further analysis and data, however, reveal these theories to be false or illogical. Recognizing the boundaries between the infinite and the finite, in nature and in human undertakings, is just the beginning of the challenge. The boundaries between postmodernism, alternative truths, religion, and the human imagination are porous at best. There are limits to what can be understood by science and what can be established as fact. However, although the cosmos itself has no bounds, the speed of light and other aspects of the material world do. Imagine if the natural constraints of time, gravity, and evolution are all made up and they suddenly disappear. While the human mind has no bounds, the human social sphere does. The issue with social structures is that they may be very diverse, and the possibilities for them in the mind might seem endless, but the social reality is finite. It's true that it's possible to ignore some aspects of the social environment by simply refusing to believe in them. All children with disabilities will be included in general education; there will be no more special schools, classes, or places for any children with disabilities, because regular or general education will become so flexible and differentiated that there will be no limits to its accommodation of and appropriation by students with a wide range of needs. When regular classes are open to everyone, no one will need specialised instruction anymore. Educators in the modern day are often urged to rethink the functions, procedures, and outcomes of their institutions. Somehow, we've come to believe that anything is dreamed of so long as it differs from the status quo has a chance of becoming a reality. This is especially true if the promise goes beyond what is currently accepted practise (e.g., "all means all," which is commonly used to mean that all students, without exceptions, can be taught together) or if it goes against commonly held beliefs, such as the idea that some children learn better in a different setting or with a different curriculum. Many suggestions to improve the state of education have a similar theme: they reject conventional wisdom, challenge popular assumptions, and provide alternatives to methods that have been entrenched in the field. Advocates of new approaches may think it's necessary and reasonable to try to change the status quo by tearing down existing institutions or replacing established norms. For this reason, arguments like the ones below are often used in defence of delivering the same content to all students in the same way and at the same time: We need to be unrealistic, irrational, and impossible if we want to change the world. Keep in mind that advocates for modern social changes like ending slavery, granting women the right to vote, and legalising same-sex marriage were formerly considered crazy, too. But time eventually proved them correct. This may be true for the ideas stated, which are plainly achievable while being opposed by many (slavery, women's suffrage, same-sex



marriage), but it is not true for all students with disabilities due to the nature of the situation at hand. The educational context, with its goal of doing away with special education as a response to educational disparities, brings to mind a Galileo cliché exemplified by quotes from an astronomer who authored a book about Galileo, Mario Livio. People who disagree with the scientific consensus on issues like climate change occasionally reference Galileo as a rebel (like themselves) who is now recognised as a hero, which is almost humorous irony.

Practical Considerations in Special and Inclusive Education

Some of the difficulties encountered in the field of special and inclusive education may be traced back to the misguided attempt to apply abstract scientific ideas or ideologies to concrete classroom situations. Some have attempted to apply concepts, conclusions, and principles from the physics of subatomic particles to social and educational concerns, such as the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, despite its complete lack of relevance to the macro-physical and social world in which we actually live and operate. Attempts to implement postmodern and DSE concepts into education tend to run into the same issues, namely, a lack of relevance to teachers' daily work and a lack of practical applicability to the nitty-gritty of teaching. DSE advocates, for instance, have argued that the disability community's failure to understand disabilities from the perspective of those who have them and/or to recognise the strengths that pupils with disabilities bring to schools is the root of the special education system's problems. However, other from a complaint that special education is dominated by ineffective, time-honoured methods of teaching—namely, direct instruction centred on a narrow set of skills—no concrete proposals for change were made. Since skill-based, direct instruction has been proved to be the most successful method for educating kids with disabilities, it would be ideal if special education provided it on a constant, predictable, and reliable basis. Lack of attention to practical application, as seen by the inability to offer nitty-gritty information about how the philosophy will be implemented and what instructors would say (or not say) in the classroom, is a common theme throughout DSE-based claims about teaching and inclusion. This one, not the other one about targeted assistance, please. As a result, a vague, overarching ideology is adopted that alludes to individualism while ignoring it in favour of ignoring practical problems. The following conclusion, for instance, is rather common: Due to the fact that each student is unique and has specific requirements, supplementary educational services cannot be provided in isolation from the regular curriculum. When services are included into and part of the regular school day, they are accessible to all kids who need them. Of course, ideally, our classroom structures and instructional practises would be universally designed to maximise the degree of fit between all students and the learning context, offering students differentiated, meaningful, and challenging curriculum, high-access instruction, targeted support structures, and choice.

We believe that individuals who advocate for eliminating special education in favour of integrating all kids into a universal curriculum and learning environment do so because they believe that general education can be adapted to meet the needs of all students. It is pointed out that full inclusion is about as plausible as assuming that all drivers should be able to operate any land-based vehicle with a single licence, that all pilots should be able to fly all aircraft for all purposes, that all builders will be licenced to construct any building of any type, that all doctors will be able to treat all diseases, and that all lawyers should be able to handle all cases. Most individuals understand the value of specialisation in professional fields. Although specialisation may be carried to ridiculous lengths, its value is generally acknowledged across industries. If good teaching is good teaching, then why would someone who is knowledgeable with teaching and schools think that specialisation in training or practise is not necessary



when working with children who have disabilities? It's true that no matter the kind of learner, there are certain universal necessities for effective instruction. Driving, flying, constructing, medical practise, hospital administration, military service, legal and dental practise, and many more professions all need for specialised knowledge and skills. We are well aware that it is unreasonable to expect a practitioner to be an expert in every subject of medicine, psychology, or psychiatry. There's no need in reiterating the obvious: specialisation is crucial in any profession, specialised training is necessary for successful specialisation practise, and experts in every field hone their skills by repeatedly applying the knowledge they've gained as specialists. We find it absurd that a single endorsement or credential is all that is required to work in special education.

Conclusion

All countries were asked to implement fully inclusive education systems under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Global Education Monitoring Report on Inclusive Education presents new evidence suggesting such statements may be exaggerated. Each and every kid has to be educated in a classroom with kids their own age. There are experts in the field of special education who support this idea of full inclusion. They haven't paid nearly enough attention to recent research on what makes a difference in the classroom for children with impairments.

The book "Inclusion or Illusion?" investigates the concept, policy, research, and practise of including all students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, in regular classroom settings. It exemplifies endless opportunities for development and progress. People with disabilities are sometimes misrepresented as being old, unhip, fragile, and clumsy. It is not uncommon for proposals to improve the condition of education to go against popular opinion.

Some proponents of novel methods may see it as vital and even ethical to work toward transforming established institutions. Nick Bostock says that if we want to change the world, we need to be unreasonable, illogical, and unattainable. Misguided efforts to apply abstract scientific theories or ideologies to classroom conditions have been linked to some of the challenges seen in the area of special and inclusive education. It would be ideal if special education delivered skill-based, direct teaching on a consistent, predictable, and dependable basis, since this has been shown to be the most effective technique for educating children with disabilities. A common thread throughout DSE-based statements concerning education and inclusion is a failure to pay sufficient attention to practical application, as seen by a lack of detail of how the philosophy would be applied.

A generalised ideology is established as a consequence, making oblique references to individualism while dismissing it in favour of avoiding real-world issues. We think it is ridiculous that just one endorsement or certificate is needed to enter the field of special education. We are well cognizant of the fact that it is excessive to anticipate a practitioner to possess knowledge in every conceivable field. It goes without saying that expertise is essential in any field of work.

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