



Differentiated Instructions to Facilitate Inclusiveness for Diverse Learners

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Abstract

The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (2006) attempts to clarify the framework under which the state, civil society and the private sector need to operate to ensure a dignified life for persons with physically/differently abled and support as their caretakers. Giving appropriate support, including differentiated instruction, students ranging from gifted to differently abled could be imparted with an appropriate education in general educational classrooms. Differentiated instruction is to be understood by teachers as a foundation that can enhance and create such inclusive classrooms. Differentiated instruction is a technique which teachers use to accommodate, understand, and act in accordance with each student's learning styles and instructional preferences. The investigators in this paper has tried to analyse the differentiated instruction approach to teaching and learning. The purpose of this paper is to study the concept and need of differentiated instruction, to analyse the components of it and also to understand the different instructional strategies and techniques through which differentiated instruction can be successfully implemented in an inclusive classroom.

Keywords: Inclusive education, differentiated instruction, diverse learners.

Introduction:

We are in an age where we talk about inclusion of all. The inclusion of all means breaking the barriers of religion, caste, creed, sex, and many other socio-demographic aspects of life. We all wish to have a society where all are equal and life respects one other's fundamental rights and follows the constitutionally approved fundamental duties. Inclusive development means a proper plan that leads us

towards sustainable development, focussing on the different initiatives for the welfare and wellbeing of disabled people which are essential for them. This emphasises a need for strengthening the proper growth of the disabled in the country.

After all, we should never forget that these disabled persons are very much part of the country and they too have the right to be parts of the Nation building. To include disabled people in our progress and development we have to first have proper information about their functional status and identify their needs since two individuals with the same impairment may face different types of difficulties in undertaking certain activities, and so have different needs that require different kinds of interventions. In a classroom setup, it is especially important for any teacher to take care of all the needs and the difficulties of each disabled child in his/her class. Every child is special, and they are unique in many ways so all cannot be treated in the same manner one is treated. For this, it is especially important for a teacher to know the background of the child from which he/she is coming. That really helps the child in his personal growth and development. Even every step that a teacher takes in the class should be known to the parents or the family members so that they are able to help the child in his growth. The area covered in 2006 was taking care of the children with Disabilities, Girls Living in Difficult Circumstances, Children with HIV/AIDS and other chronic Illness, Children of Migrant Labours, Street Children, Children with Remote Tribal Areas Working Children, and all other Children with Special Needs. These were given the focus that draws attention towards inclusive education.

Attention of New Education Policy 2020

The New Education Policy 2020 talks about education as the greatest means for social justice and equality. Equality means justice to all even to the depressed and the disabled of the society because they too have their fundamental rights. Inclusive and equitable education is essential and the right to all citizens, giving them a space to dream their world as they see it, free from all kinds of biases, gender freedom, social and economic status and their special needs to be taken care of. The draft mainly shows the successive government policies and the steady progress that has been made in the past years since independence. The study and the previous statistics have made it clear that inequalities affect the children in the early stage, especially in primary school. Different governments have done much for the improvement of the disabled children, but the gap is still to be filled. The present draft pulls the attention of the system showing the different barriers to learning in which mainly low attendance, poor learning outcomes, highest rates of dropouts and it's all because still, we are not able to create an inclusive atmosphere for such children.

Differentiated Teaching-Learning Methods of Diverse Learners

Instructing or teaching the Diverse Learners is not an easy task for any instructor. Diverse Learners needs specially trained teachers as their instructors who can understand their needs, their interests, and then instruct them. The New Education Policy 2020 clearly states that inclusive education will be an integral part of both pre-service and in-service teacher education and the trainees need to be trained and have hands-on experience with the differently-abled children to accommodate them in the normal school. The draft suggests the measures to create of inclusive school environment establishing mechanisms to address the discrimination, harassment, and intimidation of such challenged children. They also have equal rights to ensure their privacy, their dignity, their safety, and access to all the resources of the school taking part in its activities and events.

Schools will have to implement such policies that lead to the inclusion of every child. The schools will have to keep in mind the different socio-economic situations in the curriculum they design, keeping the beliefs of the community, having basic human values of tolerance, inclusiveness, equity, empathy, helpfulness and these should be incorporated throughout the curriculum.

Now as we move forward it is good so see a few things a teacher can do differently for the diverse learners helping them to develop in every aspect of life and be able to grow in their bright future. At the very outset, the teacher must first decide and develop the aims and the objectives of inclusive education.

Rational of the Study

Education for all

Protection of rights

Identification of skills

Development of social consciousness

To prepare for new challenges

Development of brotherhood

To improve the quality of education

Such aims and objectives give a definite direction to a teacher and it also helps the teacher to achieve their goals. Now when the aims and objectives are clear to the teacher, he can conduct his/her class in different ways keeping the different needs of the children in his mind. It is especially important for a teacher to conduct the class keeping the interest of the children in his class also keeping the outcomes of the class. Some of them we are going to see in the further part of this study.

Significance of the Study:

We should never forget that these differently abled persons are very much part of a country and they too have the right to be a part of the Nation building. To include differently abled people in our

progress and development we have to first have proper information about their functional status and identify their needs since two individuals with the same impairment may face different types of difficulties in undertaking certain activities, and so have different needs that require different kinds of interventions. Differentiated instruction is a technique which teachers use to accommodate, understand, and act in accordance with each student's learning styles and instructional preferences. It has been felt by the investigators that differentiated instruction is to be understood by teachers as a foundation that could enhance and create a conducive environment for inclusive classrooms.

Objectives of the Study:

- i. To study the concept and need of differentiated instruction,
- ii. To analyse the components of differentiated instruction and
- iii. to understand the different instructional strategies and techniques through which differentiated instruction can be successfully implemented in an inclusive classroom.

Methodology

Reviewing different literature available in the different books, journals, webpages, articles and papers from e-journals and online webinars have been the source of information and inspiration to do this study and reach to the relative conclusion. Secondary data information of scholarly views; articles and papers from repositories writings in various magazines and e-journals became the base for the study.

Concept of Different Methods taken for Teaching-Learning Process for Diverse Learners

Swap Tutor – Tutee Roles

In a classroom, the teacher is one of the main elements in the teaching process. This role can also be changed by a teacher in a very planned way. The teacher can divide the class into pairs and conduct few activities in which the students can change their role. First stage if one child is performing the task then once the task is completed the next child of the pair can perform his task. This way a teacher gives an equal opportunity to both the child in the pair and that develops confidence brings an understanding, and a bond is created. This same exercise can be repeated with different tasks by changing the pairs so that gives a role to all the children of the class to mix with each other creating an atmosphere of brotherhood which was one of the aims and objectives of creating an inclusive class. For the hearing-impaired children sign language can be a better option for communication.

Use of Cue Cards

Using cue cards during teaching is one of the funs exercises a teacher can conduct in her class. This is going to create interest in the children. The teacher can use these cue cards in the form of visual aid and show it to the children and all those who know the answer can write it on their notebook and show it to the teacher or they can say it aloud. The same cue cards can be used for the children who are not able to see and can prepare brain charts and allow such children to feel and read the cue and then answer the question in the way they wish. This is giving equal space to all the children in the class without having any discrimination.

Cooperative Learning

We define cooperative learning as an educational approach that is taken up by a teacher to keep the aims to organize classroom activities into academic and social learning experiences. There is much more to Cooperative Learning than merely arranging students into groups, and it has been described as “structuring positive interdependence” between the children. “Children must work in groups to complete a given task collectively towards achieving their academic goals”. It all depends on the teacher who he conducts the class, how he prepares groups of the students, what type of task is given to the group etc.

Techniques in Cooperative Learning for Diverse Learners in an Inclusive Classroom

A teacher can adapt different ways to adopt and conduct his classroom activity through cooperative learning. Few are the examples discussed below.

Jigsaw: A teacher can group students into sets of five. Assign unique information to each group member. After reading the material, instruct group members to take turns teaching their material to their teammates.

Think-Pair-Share: In this method, the teacher asks a question to the whole class and waits for the students to think about its answer. Instruct students to pair off and take turns explaining their answers to each other.

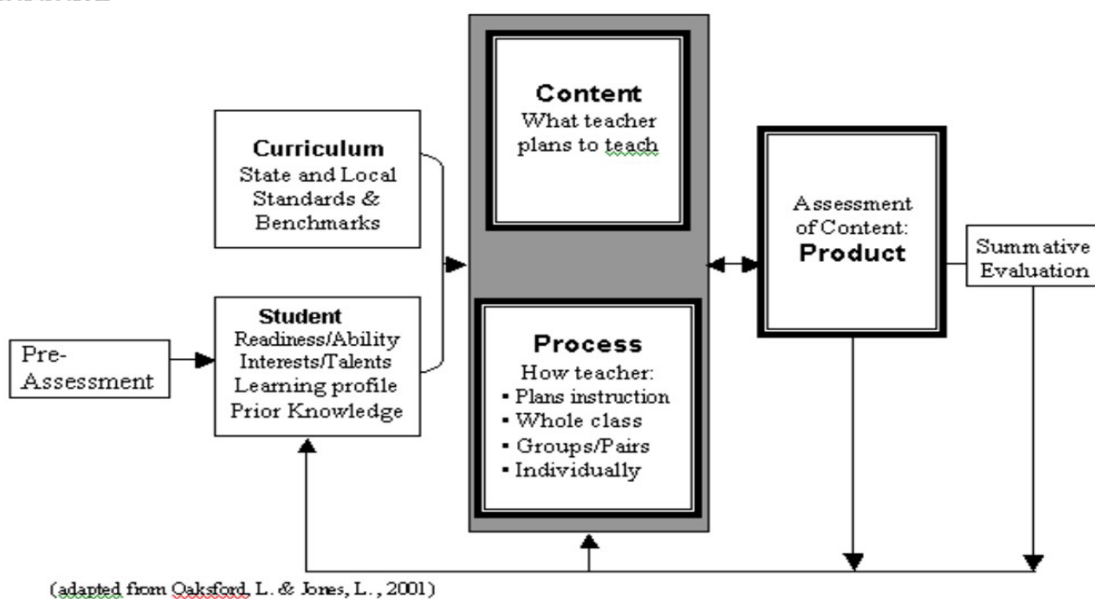
Three-Step Interview: The teacher divides group students into pairs. In step one, ask individuals to interview their partners. In step two, ask partners to reverse roles. In step three, select a few students to explain their partners' answers to the entire class.

Round Robin Brainstorming: Group students into sets of four or five each and instruct each group to appoint a recorder. Pose a question having several answers. Have group members think silently about responses and then take turns sharing their ideas with the others in the group. Ask group members not to criticize one another's responses. Instruct the recorder to write down the ideas. After a few minutes, step the discussions, and select a member of each group to read the recorder's list aloud.

Three-minute Review: Pause during or the end of a lecture or discussion. Ask students to work with partners to summarize the lecture or discussion. After three minutes, call on a few students to share their group's summary with the class.

Differentiated Instruction: Differentiated Instruction, the tailoring of educational experiences meet individual learner needs. According to the different authors, there are several key elements that give guidance to differentiation in the educational environment. According to Tomlinson (2014) there are three elements of the curriculum that can be differentiated: Content, Process, and Products. Additionally, several guidelines are noted to help educators form an understanding and develop ideas around differentiating instruction.

Learning Cycle and Decision Factors Used in Planning and Implementing Differentiated Instruction



According to the given figure, the teacher can differentiate his/her task keeping in mind the different students in his class are their needs. Let us see how the chart is presented and what it wishes to give us a message.

Content: What the student needs to learn or how the student will get access to the information. For this, the teacher can use the bloom's taxonomy and keep the different variables it talks about. Teaching every child according to its need is especially important in the class. Every child in the class does not

learn things in the same way especially when we talk about gifted children or children with special needs. So, while delivering the content the teacher must keep in mind the need of every child.

Process: Activities in which the student engages to make sense of or master the content. These activities are conducted by the teacher in different ways and keeping in mind the different needs of all the students in his/her class. Activities are designed that students take keen interest and participate in the activity. It is a way to engage the students in the class and have an interactive class according to their special needs.

Product: The product is what the student creates at the end of the lesson to demonstrate the mastery of the content. Students are asked to present what they have understood in the class and that is also a way to find out the outcome of the class. It is also an opportunity for the teacher to plan her future classes that takes care of the need and the interest of every child present in the class.

To deliver these different instructional methods the teacher can have different strategies to follow in an inclusive School. The different Inclusive strategies are as follows that can be taken up by a teacher in an inclusive class.

- Co-teaching
- Peer tutoring
- Cooperative learning
- Differentiated instructions

Now let us try to understand if the inclusive class has a Co-teaching Method that can be effective. When we talk about Co-teaching it may be defined as a mode of instruction in which two or more educators or other certified staff members share responsibility for a group of students in a single classroom or workspace. This responsibility is a collective work of all and they all coordinate, plan their strategies and work as a common group.

Strategies to be Adopted for differentiated Instructions for Diverse Learners

- One Teach, One Assist
- Station Teaching
- Parallel Teaching
- Alternative Teaching
- Team Teaching

One Teach, One Assist: In such a situation the class will have multiple instructors and each instructor will pay proper and individual attention to every single student. One teacher assumes more responsibility for instruction and the others assist the students. One teacher will be handling the activity on the blackboard the other will be sitting next to the child and seeing what the child is doing or instructing the child to follow the instructions given by the teacher on the blackboard. If the child is not able to follow the teacher instructing on the blackboard the teacher next to the child will help and guide the child in his learning.

Station Teaching: In this method, it is important to have smaller groups of students more through independent workstations. Station teaching could be one of the most effective methods in dealing with an inclusive class. In this, the students of the same class are divided according to their growth and development and different teachers take the class at the same time. The divided group will be of similar nature and the topic or the content taught will be common to all but the assigned teachers will make sure that each child in the different group understands the concept and responds to his progress in any form of output that will be conducted by the teacher.

Parallel Teaching: In parallel teaching, the class is divided into a skill or ability groups and each teacher leads a group just like it was divided into the station teaching, but in parallel teaching the subject content and the matter for each group can be different. The content matter can be decided by the teachers in the class depending on the progress of each divided group. If the teacher finds that students are able to cope with the teaching and few are not able to cope up the teacher can change the group according to the need and conduct the class according to the parallel teaching method.

Alternative Teaching: In alternative methods of teaching one teacher leads the larger group while the other provides additional practice or support. It all depends on how the children in the class are responding. If the teacher is teaching the main content, then the other teacher gives more explanation for example to the same teaching providing alternative substance. In this way, the teacher can set high but alternative expectations that are suitable for the student i.e. developing alternative assessments for each one.

Team Teaching: Team teaching involves a group of instructors working purposefully, regularly, and cooperatively to help a group of students of any age learn. Teachers together set goals for a course, design a syllabus, prepare individual lesson plans, teach students, and evaluate the outcome. Davis (1995) provides this succinct definition of team teaching: "All arrangements that include two or more faculty in some level of collaboration in the planning and delivery of a course" (p. 8). In this way, team teaching can be helpful in an inclusive classroom, but the planning should be worked out well.

Teachers can use different types or methods for team teaching (Klein, 1990). They can have interactive team teaching, rotational format team teaching, participant-observer team teaching, and team coordination (McDaniels and Colarulli, 1997). It all depends on the planning and the role the different teachers wish to play during team teaching.

Conclusion

In summary, we can conclude that successful Differentiated Instructional Methods for diverse learners requires the active institutional and faculty commitment of time, resources, and careful planning. We must always remember we are trying to bring the children of special needs in the mainstream of society through inclusive education. By doing, different teaching methods can enhance the teaching and learning experiences of students and faculty and fulfil the purposes of inclusive education by helping participants integrate disparate disciplines and perspectives.

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