



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION : STRATEGIES TO BETTER INTEGRATE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN MAINSTREAM CLASSROOMS

Dr Amita Solanki

Assistant Professor, Vidyavati Mukand Lal Girls PG College

CCS University, Meerut

ABSTRACT

The development of inclusive education programs, especially those aimed at successfully integrating students with disabilities into regular classes, has advanced significantly in recent years. This study evaluates the degree to which instructors are adopting and employing inclusive approaches to accommodate the diverse requirements of learners with impairments. A detailed examination of existing research was done, focussing on evidence-based classroom techniques that enhance active involvement, accessibility, and a sense of belonging among children with special needs. The conceptual analysis and literature assessment are concentrated on techniques now implemented with school-aged children, encompassing both instructional methods and classroom adjustments. By merging empirical data with academic viewpoints, this article attempts to equip educators, researchers, and policymakers with a clearer understanding of how inclusive policies help both instructors and students in mainstream educational environments.

Keywords: *Inclusive Education, Mainstream Classrooms, Students with Disabilities, Inclusive Classroom Strategies, Differentiated Instruction*

INTRODUCTION

To ensure that all students, irrespective of their cognitive, affective, or social characteristics, have equal access to educational opportunities, inclusive education has emerged as a game-changing strategy in contemporary pedagogy. The idea that all children should have equal access to education in a regular classroom is fundamental to this worldview [1]. The inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classrooms is now considered a moral and legal necessity, backed by international frameworks like the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [2] and education policies on a global scale, as schools work towards greater diversity and equity.

All students benefit from increased academic engagement and personal development when students with disabilities are fully integrated into regular school settings [3]. However, gaining genuine inclusion takes more than merely physical placement. It involves the deployment of well-researched, adaptable, and student-centered methods that fulfil the special learning needs of children with disabilities while maintaining high academic standards for the overall class [4].

Among the most effective techniques are differentiated instruction, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), individualized education plans (IEPs), peer tutoring, co-teaching models, and the use of assistive technology

[5][6]. These strategies emphasise on flexibility in teaching methods, curriculum delivery, and assessment, enabling instructors to react to a broad spectrum of learners. Equally vital is teacher training and expertise, which empower educators to detect and respond to the issues faced by children with disabilities in inclusive classrooms[7] .

This study attempts to analyse and appraise the practical strategies now employed to better integrate students with impairments into normal classrooms. By examining modern research, teacher experiences, and case studies, it seeks to deliver substantial insights into effective practices that support inclusive learning environments. Ultimately, the purpose is to contribute to an educational atmosphere where diversity is embraced, and every student has the potential to grow.

OBJECTIVES

1. To determine which teaching methods work best for integrating students with impairments into regular classes.
2. To assess how inclusive teaching methods affect students with impairments' educational experiences.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Which research topics are currently being studied in India and outside to improve the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classroom settings?

MATERIAL AND METHOD

A systematic literature review that adhered to the PRISMA guidelines (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) was used in the current investigation. Analyzing and evaluating current research trends centred on strategies for successfully integrating kids with disabilities into regular classrooms was the aim of this study. The research investigated how inclusive methods have been employed by educators across school and higher education contexts, both in India and internationally[8]. To analyse the route of research and identify the most effective ways, articles from prior fundamental research to the newest discoveries (2010–2024) were studied.

Literature Search Strategy

A rigorous computer-based search was done using phrases such as "inclusive education strategies," "integration of students with disabilities," "inclusive classroom practices," and "mainstreaming special needs students." The literature search stretched from 2010 to 2024, utilising databases and platforms such as Google Scholar, PsycINFO, ERIC, Elsevier, SAGE Journals, and PubMed. The search was aimed to acquire a broad range of peer-reviewed literature relating to inclusive teaching strategies in mainstream classroom settings.

Eligibility Criteria

This literature review encompasses articles published between 2010 and 2024 that mostly dealt with treatments that helped handicapped children become fully integrated members of their regular school communities. All research methods were considered, including but not limited to: quantitative, qualitative, descriptive, experimental, survey, or interview-based investigations. Exclusion criteria for studies included:

a narrow focus on a particular variable, Contained partial data or abstracts only , Had not been peer-reviewed or were they duplicates, Did not prioritize the inclusion of students with impairments in mainstream classrooms.

Selection Criteria

Articles and research papers were selected based on the following criteria:

- Direct link to measures enabling the inclusion of youngsters with disabilities.
- Clearly articulated research aims tied to inclusive teaching or classroom activities.
- Published in English between 2010 and 2024.
- Published in peer-reviewed publications or as PhD theses.
- Original research papers with detailed data and analysis.

After applying these inclusion criteria to 65 initially found papers, 20 high-quality research publications were selected for final review[9].

Data Extraction and Inclusion

Ultimately, twenty publications were included in the qualitative synthesis. The most of them were quantitative studies, although a smaller minority employed qualitative methodologies. The selected publications were examined based on their year of publication, sample size, research methodology, and relevance to classroom inclusion of children with disabilities. All articles originate from credible, peer-reviewed journals, establishing a firm academic foundation for the research. The findings revealed insights into both teaching techniques and institutional actions that support inclusive education in mainstream cultures.

RESULT

Using these parameters, we narrowed the results down to 20 publications, which we then reviewed in depth to pull out the data we needed for our analysis. The following topics were covered in the 20 papers: inclusive classroom strategies (12 articles), inclusive pedagogies (2 articles), inclusive classroom management (5 pieces), social inclusion (1 article), and communication approaches (4 articles).

Table 1.1: Inclusion Classroom Strategies Research Synthesis

Author/Year	Goal of the research	Research design, sample size	Important Finding	Recommendation
Savira, S. I., et al. 2023[10]	How educators interpret difficulties and actions,	I. Qualitative II. Descriptive	Views of teachers on inclusion varied from particular	Teachers should be taught and helped adequately

	particularly in the classroom, as demonstrations of beliefs toward inclusive education.	Research Design III.20	needs to wider issues of non-discriminatory education. The inclusive pedagogies encompassed educational, psychological and communicative tactics in tackling diversity	for inclusive classroom.
Bagum, M., et al. 2024[11]	How access instructional tactics influenced classroom engagement across distinct student diversity demographics.	I. Quantitative II. Survey-method III.340	Little difference occurs amongst practitioners on the nature of its worth; the integration of technology increases inclusiveness, and teaching practices must be altered to match a range of learning styles.	Targeted professional development, contextualized methods, qualification-based tactics in terms of its efficacy of the Inclusive Classroom Practice
Sanchez, V. J. 2023[12]	How general education teachers' classroom management and instructional approaches influence students with special needs in an inclusive classroom setting	I. Qualitative II. Interview-based III. 7	Varied experiences among general education instructors with special needs kids' conduct, underlining the critical significance of classroom management approaches.	An sufficient amount of training required for instructors in inclusive classroom management practices.

Nthibeli, M., et al. 2022[13]	To find out how much inclusion of kids with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) there was in three South African schools.	I. Qualitative II. Interview-based	The approaches of education that might be utilized to engage kids with ASD in the classroom include differentiation, scaffolding, use of visual cues, group work arrangements, and cooperation.	Collaboration and training of the instructors are highly crucial
Furner, J. M., et al. 2022[14]	To investigate strategies by which mathematical anxiety may be minimised in children with disabilities by concentrating on approaches to build math self-efficacy as a strategy to support achievement in STEM	I. Quantitative II. Mixed-method	Individualized education, fostering good math attitudes, technological utilisation, collaborative problem solving, and strengthening the confidence of children in a bid to alleviate arithmetic fear.	Numerous techniques to help pupils deal with arithmetic fear and develop learners free atmosphere.
Adesokan, A. 2022[15]	This research evaluated different coping methods instructors utilised in inclusive classroom for educating children with ADHD in Nigeria.	I. Quantitative II. Descriptive Survey III. 50	Teachers employed certain coping methods, support from family and friends, attending development and resilience training programs, selfcontrol, and	Development and personal development training programs were proposed for the children affected by ADHD condition.

			seeking social assistance	
Ferguson, L. 2022[16]	To investigate how incorporating music instruction into the classroom enhanced the learning environment and encouraged inclusivity.	I. Qualitative II. Experiential Study	Especially in children with autism spectrum condition, music aided in the development of language, and it improved socio emotional learning	Music programming and musical involvement are facilitators toward an inclusive learning in the classroom.
Belaid, L. 2022[17]	Having a focus on UPMC Algerian training to promote inclusive classroom techniques, the research attempted to assess how newly recruited instructors were practicing remote education.	I. Qualitative II. Interpretative method	Blended learning was vital throughout the outbreak but encountered obstacles owing to instructors and learners' lack of virtual preparedness. Despite Algerian training efforts, incorporating internet communication into classroom methods remained hard.	Training instructors and students should use Moodle, Open edX, and flex model.
Lavrysh, Y., et al. 2022[18]	How well inclusive communication practices in Ukrainian higher education's English for Specific Purposes classroom helped Internal	I. Qualitative II. Case Study III.110	These initiatives increased IDP children's welfare, learner wellbeing, and social inclusion by emphasizing individualization	ESP courses must include inclusive communication practices more.

	Displaced Persons' pupils socialize.		, diversity, and differentiation.	
Welter, E. R. 2021[19]	To find the most inclusive classroom methods for disabled kids' academic and social/behavioural success.	I. Qualitative II. Review-based III.25	No correlation between disability-related academic success and overall class inclusion. However, inclusive classrooms routinely improve children' conduct and social skills.	Co-teaching, personalized education, scaffolding, and peer tutoring for inclusive classrooms.
Mete, P. 2020[20]	To identify high school students' inclusive classroom challenges and provide solutions	I. Qualitative II. Case study III.12	The inclusion curriculum, exams, and teaching practices remain unchanged. Some inclusive class children claimed that their families were supportive, but full integration with the process was absent.	Consider each student's requirements, capabilities, and traits.
Schley, S., & Marchetti, C. 2020[21]	To advise faculty developers on how to meet the pedagogical needs of inclusion, with a focus on ways to increase	I. Qualitative II. Observation	Simple pedagogical tactics including altering lesson plans, adding technology, and increasing student	Making classrooms inclusive, employing accessible technology, and providing replacement

	inclusion, interaction, and engagement in courses with disabled students.		participation may increase classroom accessibility and inclusion for students with disabilities.	activities and examinations.
Tahira, M., et al. 2020[22]	This research examined early childhood education (ECE) teachers' views on inclusive classroom management..	I. Qualitative II. Interpretative phenomenologica l study III.12	ECE instructors stressed teacher-directed classroom management, UDL, counseling, reinforcement, and inclusion. They struggled, particularly with disabled pupils.	Teacher-directed classroom management to benefit all children in inclusive settings
Gledhill, J., & Currie, J. L. 2020[23]	To determine whether inclusive classroom techniques improve learning for autistic kids. That is, social support is highlighted.	I. Qualitative II. Literature review approach	Social support methods include peer acceptance, instructional methodologies, and school integration help ASD youngsters with healthy social interaction and wellness.	Inclusive education and social assistance improve ASD kids' social relationships and academic performance.
Acheampong, D. Y. 2019[24]	To find inclusive education solutions for visually impaired pupils in schools and classrooms.	I. Qualitative II. Conceptual review approach III. 50	Visually Impaired Students' Inclusive Learning: Family-School Collaboration It means personalizing teaching, making it	Future qualitative study on responsive teaching practices, cultural and socioeconomic settings, learning models for

			concrete, participatory, and integrating classroom experiences.	visually impaired pupils
Rodgers Woods, E. 2019[25]	This study examined how the physical classroom environment and tactics affect learning, particularly for University of Georgia students with impairments.	I. Mixed method study II. Explanatory Research	Individual requirements influence classroom design, and furniture, access, technology, and atmosphere create obstacles, diversions, and sensory consequences.	Implement disability-friendly Universal Design principles.
Ngcezulla, B. 2018 South Africa[26]	Examine how mainstream Grade 4 teachers help LSEN students in inclusive classrooms.	I. Qualitative II. Interview-based III. A single mainstream school.	instructors employed repeated instructions, seating arrangements, auxiliary instructors, and instructional help to suit all pupils, including LSEN kids.	Teachers should get formal training in inclusive education and the SIAS policy to help LSEN students in the classroom.
Sivalingam, A. 2017 Canada[27]	The decline in ESL programs and classroom teachers' methods for aiding ELL pupils	I. Qualitative II. Interview based III. 2	Supporting ELLs' learning via inclusive settings and stakeholder cooperation. To increase ELL language acquisition, educators must improve their	Good preparation for teacher candidates to evaluate and teach ELLs

			teaching approaches.	
Schmidt, M. C. S. 2016 Denmark[28]	Teaching methods and student involvement in two Danish elementary schools. Math problems and inclusion are significant concerns in inclusive classrooms.	I. Qualitative II. Case Study III. Two primary Schools	The instructors tried to engage students with learning disabilities in active learning, but they didn't comprehend why they had arithmetic problems.	In inclusive classrooms, teachers identify and help math-challenged pupils.
Fernández Batanero, J. M. 2010 Spain[29]	Explore effective inclusive education approaches and practices, focusing on Spanish secondary school students at risk of educational exclusion.	I. Qualitative II. Descriptive (Case Study) III. A single secondary school	To prevent early dropouts, educational policy must encourage inclusive teaching, social involvement, and peaceful coexisting models.	Encourage creative living and education to boost inclusiveness and lower dropout rates.

DISCUSSION

As a result of this evaluation, we have discovered that the majority of these studies used a qualitative methodology to investigate inclusive classroom strategies. Furthermore, their perspectives on research design, methodology, and recommendations were fairly comparable to one another. As an example, one study focused on descriptive design research work based on qualitative approaches in Indonesia; more specifically, it intended to understand how educators saw inclusive education. Additionally, the study was conducted in Indonesia. In order to gain insight into the viewpoints of general education teachers about the inclusion of children with autism spectrum disorder, researchers from South Africa and the Philippines used qualitative approaches that were based on interviews. Numerous research have also concentrated on qualitative and observational approaches in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the Inclusive Strategies. These methodologies have been used in a number of studies. There were two research that used quantitative survey methods to investigate mathematics anxiety and teaching strategies in an inclusive classroom. The United States was the site of the second research, whereas Pakistan was the site of the first. Within the third investigation, mixed-method methods were used. We will rely on older research in the field, such as in

Norway and in Denmark, which use qualitative approaches such as conceptual reviews and case studies, in order to investigate inclusive initiatives for students with visual impairments and learning disabilities. These studies were conducted in Norway and Denmark, respectively. Throughout the course of the study, the findings and recommendations have continuously brought to light the need of implementing inclusion efforts and targeted professional development in the classroom.

A research has shown that teaching professionals need to participate in professional development in order to successfully execute differentiated and technology-enhanced lesson plans that are designed to meet the needs of all students. Both conducted research that focused on the methods of classroom management and the ways in which educators may be prepared to meet the diverse requirements of their students. Two of the few studies that have advised teacher training and collaboration as a way of engaging children on the autistic spectrum via the use of social support and differentiation. Both of these research were conducted in the year 2010. It has been shown via research that inclusive communication approaches are of utmost importance in assisting those who have been displaced inside their own country to realign themselves towards social inclusion. It is feasible that children with impairments might achieve better social and academic outcomes via the implementation of pedagogical adjustments, co-teaching, and personalized education.

Earlier research highlighted the significance of formal teacher education and investigated several strategies for fostering an inclusive learning environment in the classroom. As a result, the topics keep coming up, which highlights how essential it is to cultivate a sense of belonging within educational environments via the use of inclusive pedagogical strategies and professional development opportunities. Even though these results have been made, there is still a major paucity of study on the effectiveness of these strategies over the course of a longer period of time across a wide range of educational environments and student populations. There is a possibility that future research will be conducted in the form of case studies, experiments, or longitudinal studies to investigate the impact that inclusive educational methods have on the academic performance of students over the long term. It is possible that the findings cannot be transferred to other educational contexts owing to a number of factors, including variances in the execution and integrity of the inclusive efforts[30]. Furthermore, the majority of studies are cross-sectional, which further restricts the ability to draw conclusions about causal relationships. Furthermore, there is a significant dependence on self-reported data from both instructors and students, which leads to the possibility of bias[31].

CONCLUSION

This evaluation shows that research-based strategies are needed to incorporate disabled students into mainstream courses. Individualized education, collaborative teaching, and assistive technology are essential to meet these students' diverse learning needs and provide an inclusive learning environment. These strategies assist pupils thrive in school and develop social and emotional abilities, according to [32], [33], and [34]. Strong legislative frameworks, instructor CPD, and supportive networks help inclusive education succeed. Breaking down inclusion barriers requires educators to be willing and able to fulfill the needs of diverse pupils. Parents, administrators, special education teachers, and general education teachers must collaborate to build inclusive schools. Teachers, academics, legislators, and others must work together to advance inclusive education. These aims should include promoting accessible, equitable, and diversely responsive schools . Inclusive methods, which require creativity, cooperation, and study, may make mainstream classrooms more equitable for all students, including those with disabilities.

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