UNIT 5

MAINSTREAMING AND INTEGRATED EDUCATION

Meaning – characteristics of integrated education – Equality and quality of integrated education- sustainable practice – create positive and innovative outcome – Safeguarding the needs of pupils with special educational needs – Assessment methods for inclusive school – Norm reference tests (NRT) and Criterion reference tests (CRT) – Behavioural and Clinical assessment – continuous and comprehensive assessment.

INTRODUCTION

In India, "integrated education" has been provided mainly to students with mild disabilities who are considered "easy" to include into regular school programs. Students with severe disabilities, in a majority of cases, do not attend a school, or in rare cases, attend a special school.

MEANING OF INTEGRATED EDUCATION

Disabled people of all ages and/or those learners with 'Special Educational Needs' labels being placed in mainstream education settings with some adaptations and resources, but on condition that the disabled person and/or the learner with 'Special Educational Needs' labels can fit in with pre-existing structures, attitudes,and an unaltered environment.

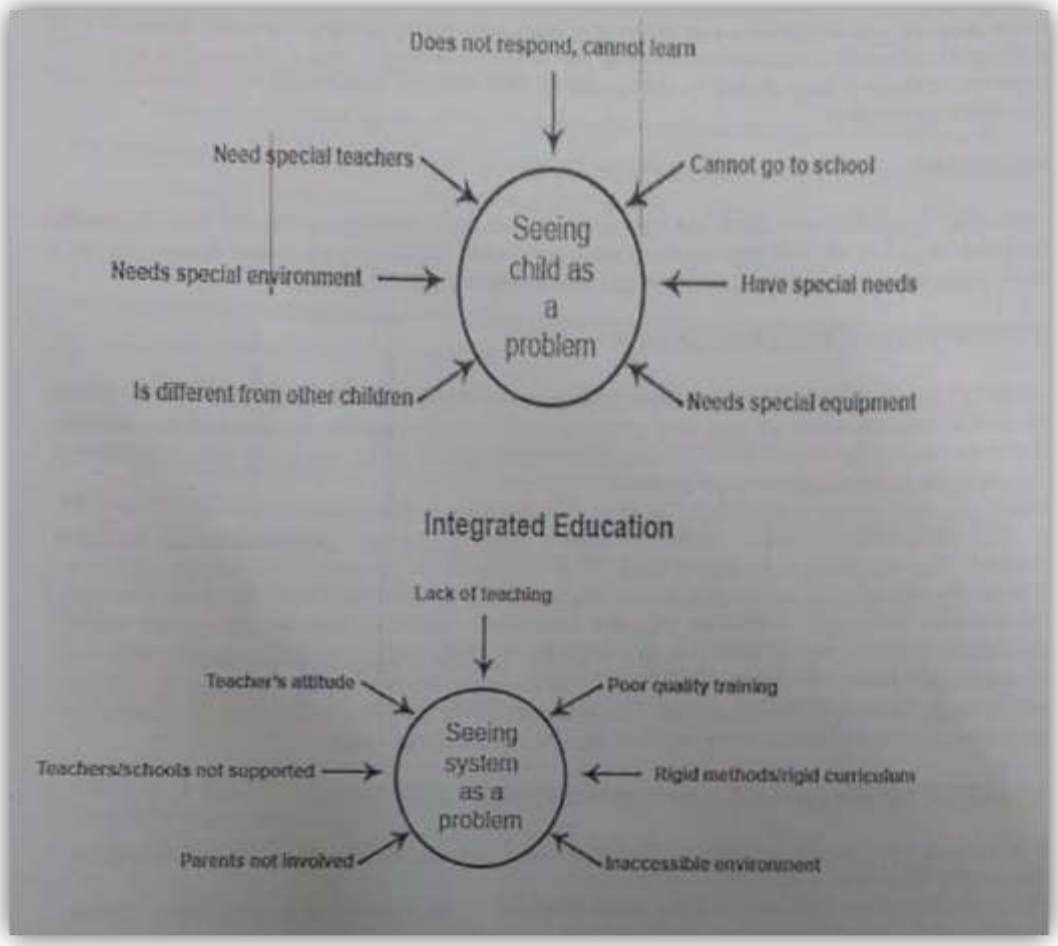
For example: the child is required to "fit in" to what already exists in the school.

In the "Integrated education" model "whenever possible, students with disabilities attend a regular school".The emphasis, however, is upon the student to fit the system rather than the system to adapt to meet the educational needs of a student. In India, "integrated education" has been provided mainly to students with mild disabilities who are considered "easy" to include into regular school programs. Students with severe disabilities, in a majority of cases, do not attend a school, or in rare cases, attend a special school. Integrated education, is designed to promote the

retention of children with disabilities in the regular school system. Children were to be provided with financial support for books, stationery, school uniforms, transportation, special equipment,and aids.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INTEGRATED EDUCATION

- It is proposed to provide educational facilities under this scheme for children with disabilities who can be integrated in general schools.
- While rehabilitation assistance will be made available to all children with disabilities, student benefits will be extended on the recommendation by the assessment team.
- The scheme includes pre-school training for the disabled children andcounselling for the parents.
- This would be an activity preparatory to the child coming into the regular school system.
- It would include, among other things, special training for the hearing handicapped children, mobility and orientation training for the visually handicapped, daily living and communication skills training required by children with other disabilities, parent counselling and training in home management of these children.
- The education of the disabled children under this scheme will continue up to the senior secondary school level and includes vocational courses equivalent to the senior secondary stage.
- A disabled child in receipt of any scholarship/assistance under some other scheme relating to disability from State/Central Government will not be eligible for any of the benefits under this scheme unless he/she is willing to forego the other sources of assistance.



<u>Sustainable Practices:</u>

The following are some of the sustainable practices of inclusive education settings.

High Expectations:

All aspects of a student's educational programming reflect high expectations. To do otherwise results in harm such as fewer educational opportunities, inferior literacy instruction, a segregated education, and fewer choices as an adult.

Social Relationships and Natural Supports:

Students are in an environment that fosters friendships and encourages full participation in all activities.

Full Participation and Membership in Age

Appropriate General Education Classrooms

Quality Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC):

Students who are unable to communicate using spoken or sign language have access to accurate and reliable AAC supports and services.

Ongoing Performance-Based Assessments:

Assessments identify students' learning and communication styles, preferences and interests, academic strengths and weaknesses, and needs for support.

Differentiated Instruction:

The curriculum and instruction are designed to accommodate the full range of student diversity. Individualized supports are provided to students with significant disabilities to enable them to fully participate and make progress within the general education curriculum.

Family-School Partnerships:

Families are equipped to be primary advocates for their children and connected to accessible, meaningful resources.

Team Collaboration:

General and special education teachers and related service providers work together in the design, implementation, and evaluation of students' educational programs and their IEPs (Individualized Education Programs).

Self-determination:

Schools encourage students to identify their own strengths, advocate for the supports they need, and set and pursue meaningful and self identified goals.

Futures Planning:

High school students develop four-year plans of study with their guidance counsellors and actively participate in the design and pursuit of plans for the transition from school to post-secondary and adult lives.

Ongoing Professional Development for General and Special Education Staff

Special and General Education Reform:

An overarching goal of reform is the creation of a community of learners that is fully inclusive of students with significant disabilities.

Create positive an innovative outcome:

The input-process-outcome-context model for IE indicates School Climate and Teaching/Learning as two broad domains concerned with process. Within these process domains, a whole-school approach to IE is emerging as critical to effective implementation, as it is in the North. Basic principles of whole-school approaches include participation and collaboration. Participation has come to mean more than just professionals and communities. In Nicaragua, for example, a rural primary school was one of the first schools to establish a student council under which students took an active part in school-decision making. A basic principle of Child-to child programs also emphasizes student responsibility for learning and participation in whole school initiatives. A personal change process appears to be important for changing attitudes as part of the process of teaching and learning. In Uganda, teachers reported that ignorance, fear, and a lack of confidence were root causes of their attitudes towards children with disabilities before these children entered their classrooms. As they "got used to" these children, they reported increased confidence, coping strategies, and positive attitude change.56 Disabled adults as role models in schools also have proven successful as innovative alternative approaches to the traditional school aides. In Deaf Education, students are often pulled out of the classroom to learn sign language. Okwaput (2001) recommends that all children receive training in sign language to promote social inclusion and positive school climate.

Beyond a 'whole-school' approach to implementing IE, the proposed framework indicates an open-system. Promising and sustainable practice in IE goes beyond in-school and whole-school collaboration efforts to link with other sectors and the community. Collaborative Support Teams are an innovative approach adopted in Vietnam. A comprehensive CBR program in Vietnam encompasses several of the major provinces across the country. The program links education and health sectors to

provide joint training of services, and is fully integrated into the Primary Health Care Network of hospitals, clinics, and rehabilitation centers. Local Community Support Teams consist of community leaders, education and health workers, social workers, representatives from women's and youth unions, and parents of disabled children. The goal is to enhance the conditions needed for school-readiness and school attendance through support to families and to reach a large number of children. The program is run at a cost-level that can be maintained by local communities.

This domain is perhaps one of the most underdeveloped of all domains in IE programs in the South as well as in the North. IE programs are beginning to place more emphasis on continuous evaluations as inputs (e.g., assessments of needs and feasibility studies), process (both formative and summative evaluations of the implementation activities) and outcomes/impacts of IE programs. As an example of input assessment, prior to implementing an IE project in Nicaragua, four data instruments were used to carry out a situation analysis in each school.59 These input assessments are often successful in promoting sustainability. Another example of successful sustainability in the literature comes from Guyana. Their CBR project actively involved parents, who established a Village Health Committee and conducted a needs assessment. As a result of the needs assessment, they set up a Resource Centre in the village near the elder leaders' compound. From this, they converted the Centre into a Regional School, and now conduct a regional CBR program. Proc

Innovative Outcomes of Inclusive Education:

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Undertaking assessments requires skill and training. More programs are reporting specific focus on assessment in their training activities. UNESCO developed a manual for administrators and educational leaders. This Open File on Inclusive Education contains a comprehensive section on education assessment to inform planning and provision of services as part of quality IE. Assessment issues covered include school-level, classroom-level, and community-level strategies. The Index for Inclusion has been piloted in several countries of the South (India, South Africa, and Brazil) and is another assessment tool for assessing quality IE through studying development activities.

An interesting process approach that combines aspects of teacher action research and knowledge transfer was reported by Lehtomäki (2002). The province of Maputo in Mozambique organized an inclusive education competition. Teachers were invited to submit case reports of strategies they used to identify and instruct SEN students in their classrooms. A panel of education officers and teachers juried the reports. Jurists read the reports, listen to teachers' presentations, discuss the

inclusive school practice, and evaluate training needs. Awards for best case reports included bicycles, radios, and books on IE. The second stage of the competition involved knowledge transfer to schools in Maputo and public education activities.

Outcomes of IE are often illusive and difficult to measure. Student achievement tests of content knowledge provide only one indicator of impact, and are not strongly linked to success in adult life, nor do they provide a measure of creative and analytical problem-solving skills needed for survival. The challenge is to measure success in terms of broad indicators of outcomes and impact. Stubbs (1993) suggests that IE programs look for improvements at all levels: individual, family, community, organization, and government. Specific indicators include: presence, participation, choice, respect, knowledge and skills.65 Lynch (2001) advocates for evaluation of IE programs at all levels (institutional and teacher performance as well as student performance) and against the goals of inclusion within a democratic, human-rights-based environment.

SAFEGUARDING THE NEEDS OF PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS:

One of the major initiatives from the government of India to promote "integrated education" is the program of Integrated Education of Disabled Children (IEDC). In 1974, the Ministry of Welfare, Central Government of India, initiated the IEDC program to promote the integration of students with mild to moderate disabilities into regular schools. The program was also designed to promote the retention of children with disabilities in the regular school system.

Children were to be provided with financial support for books, stationery, school uniforms, transportation, special equipment and aids. The state governments were provided with 50 percent of the financial assistance to implement this program in regular schools. However, the program met with little success.

Rane (1983), in his evaluation of this program in the state of Maharashtra, reported that

(a) the non-availability of trained and experienced teachers,

(b) lack of orientation among regular school staff about the problems of disabled children and their educational needs, and

(c) The non-availability of equipment and educational materials were major factors in the failure of the program.

Also, a lack of coordination among the various departments to implement the scheme was another major factor in the failure of the IEDC plan. Mani (1988) reported that by 1979-80, only 1,881 children from 81 schools all over the country had benefited from this program.

Due to its shortcomings, the IEDC program was revised in 1992. Under the revised scheme, 100 percent assistance became available to schools involved in the "integration" of students with disabilities. Various non-government organizations are now fully funded to implement the program.

According to the most recent estimates, the IEDC is being implemented in 26 States and Union territories, serving more than 53,000 students enrolled in 14,905 schools (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 2000). In this regard, Kerala has shown remarkable success. The IEDC program is implemented in 4,487 schools in this state with 12,961 children being served (Ministry of Information and broadcasting, 2000).

In 1987, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), in association with UNICEF and the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) developed the Project for Integrated Education for the Disabled (PIED). The aim of the project was to strengthen the IEDC plan NCERT, 1987. Instead of confining the program to a particular institution or school PIED adopted a "Composite Area Approach" that converted all regular schools within a specified area, referred to as a lock, into integrated schools. These schools had to share resources such as specialized equipment, instructional materials and special education teachers. One key aspect of

the project was the teacher training component. The teacher training program, available to teachers in each selected block, allowed a three-level training approach:

1. afive-day orientation course for all the teachers in the regular schools,
2. a six-week intensive training course for 10 percent of the teachers, and
3. a one-year multi-category training program for eight to ten regular school teachers.

The teachers who completed the one-yearmulti-category training program were required to act as source teachers. This project produced several positive results. Jangira and Ahuja (1993) reported that as a result of improved program planning and better management skills now made available to the teachers, the capacity of various states to implement integration programs was enhanced. Both regular school teachers and students became more receptive toward students with disabilities (Azad, 1996). About 13,000 children with disabilities received educational services in regular school (Azad, 1996). More than 9,000 teachers received training to work with disabled students in integrated settings (Azad, 1996). The success of the PIED project led to an increased commitment by the Department of Education to integrate students with disabilities (Jangira&Ahuja, 1993).

In 1996, the Government of India enacted the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) act (PWD act) of 1995 (Ministry of Law Justice and Company Affairs, 1996). The Act provided for both preventive and promotional aspects of rehabilitation. It covered such aspects as education, employment, non-discrimination, prevention and early detection, social security, research and manpower development, and affirmative action. Seven categories of disability were covered in the legislation, namely "blindness," "low vision," "leprosy cured," "hearing impairment," "locomotor disability." "Mental retardation" and "mental illness".

The PWD Act required the Central, State, and Union Territory Governments to ensure that all children with disabilities had access to a "free and appropriate"

education until the age of 18 years. It also called upon these three tiers of Government to promote "integrated education". The Act outlined a comprehensive education scheme to provide transportation facilities, remove architectural barriers, supply free books and other study materials, grant scholarships, restructure curriculum, and modify the examinations system for the benefit of children with special needs.

In order to expand educational opportunities for children with disabilities, the Central Government in its last Five-Year Plan (1997-2002), set aside 1,000 million rupees specifically for the provision of integrated education (Ministry of Welfare, 1997, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 2000). Baquer&Sharma (1997) considered the passage of the PWD Act as a landmark step in the history of rehabilitation services in India. The stated:

In a country like India the numbers of disabled are so large, their problems so complex, available resources so scarce and social attitudes so damaging, it is only legislation which can eventually bring about a substantial change in a uniform manner. Although legislation cannot alone radically change the fabric of a society in a short span of time, it can nevertheless, increase accessibility of the disabled to education and employment, to public buildings and shopping centres, to means of transport and communication.

If fully implemented, this Act has the potential to change the educational status of more than 30 million children with disabilities who currently do not have access to any form of education. However, providing education to such a vast number of children with disabilities in the world's second most populated country will require a number of challenges and issues to be addressed at both the macro and micro levels of Indian society.

Training of teachers:

If integrated education is to become a reality in India, then the training of teachers has to become a top priority. The educational authorities in India may adopt

a policy of training one teacher from each school or a cluster schools. The teacher would need to be provided with intensive training to work with various disabilities and could then acts as an integration specialist or an inclusion facilitator for one or a number of schools located in close proximity. A similar strategy has already worked well in certain parts of India when several school teachers were specifically trained to work in integrated settings under the PIED program and is recommended by several researchers in India. Alsoin-service teachers would need continued training to update their skills and knowledge of integrated education strategies

It is clear that regular school educators need training in issues related to the implementation of integrated education. A question that arises with regard to such training is the identification of specific content that should be included in these training programs. Given the enormous diversity in India, further research is clearly warranted. Sharma (1992) suggest that the curriculum for pre-service training programs should be carefully developed, incorporating feedback from special and regular educators. Some research has been conducted in India that points out that educators need basic skills, professional knowledge, communication and interaction skills, knowledge about assessment techniques, and resource management, knowledge of multigrade teaching, instructional techniques, and peer-tutoring and cooperative learning techniques to include students with disabilities into regular classes.

Need to design innovative system of training:

Several authors have cautioned that India will not be able to successfully implement integrated educational service unless regular school educators are trained at mass scale, comments on this situation as follows: " the number of persons who need training is very large and the conventional training methods cannot simply meet the requirements. "Therefore, there is a need to design some innovative models to train educators at mass level. One possibility to educate such a large number of teachers is by using Distance Open Learning or DOL. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has a history of successfully running courses for a larger number of

students using DOL mode. IGNOU, in association with Rehabilitation Council of India, is considering offering various courses to the trainers of children with disabilities, including teachers. It is expected that such training, accompanied with ongoing in-service training, would prove very useful for school educators. It would, however, be important that practical aspects of implementing integrated education form a key part of any such course.

Need for collaboration between different ministries:

Different ministries in India administer various services for persons with disabilities (Alur, 2001). For example, while "integrated education" is the responsibility of Ministry of Human Resource Development, education in special schools is the responsibility of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. This is just one example of the waste of already limited resources. India cannot afford --- have such administrative arrangements. There is a need for streamlining administrative arrangements so that funds provided to different ministries for persons with disabilities can be used effectively.

Evolve NGO's in implementing integrated education programs:

There are more than one million NGO's working in India (Canadian International Development Agency, 2003). Although not all of them are working in the education sector, a large number still provide educational services to children with disabilities. These organizations can play a significant role in implementing integrated education because they are widely located in India and can serve both urban and rural school communities. Unfortunately, a large majority of NGOs still believe that aggregated education is the best way to educate students with disabilities (Alur, 2001). It would, therefore, be necessary to train the key stakeholders in these NGO's about the benefits of integrated education as well as practical aspects of implementing integrated education in regular schools.

Establish an alternate system of examination:

Most school education in Indiaare connected that integration of students with disabilities would built in lowering school standards because these students won't be able to pass exams. This seems to be a genuine concern of teachers because it can influence their promotion. Thus, it is necessary to establish an alternative system of examination for students with disabilities. Such an examination system is already in practice in the USA. Students in this system are asked to do activities that demonstrate their abilities rather than disabilities. It is expected that teachers in India could feel more comfortable including students with disabilities in their classrooms if such a system listed.

School-university partnership

The multilingual, multi-cultural and multi-religious nature of India is often cited as a challenge implementing any educational reforms. Local universities in each of the states and union territoriesmay play a significant rule in overcoming this challenge. Pilot projects involving local schools could be initiated by universities to explore strategies that may be appropriate for each region. Also, texts on practical strategies can be produced in the common language spoken by educators in each of the States.

Evidence from a number of Western countries indicates that such collaborative projects can produce positive results for students with disabilities as well as for school educators. An example of one such project is the Learning Improves an Networking Communities (LINC) program that was conducted in partnership between the Catholic Education Commission, Victoria (CECV) and Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. The project was geared to identify the factors within the school environment that most effectively contribute to successful integrated practices, building learning communities and to positive student learning outcomes and learning opportunities.

A collaborative inquiry approach was employed with approximately 45 teachers undertaking a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Special Education) in eight primary and secondary schools over the three-year study (2001-2003). The school-based

professional development was focused on priorities identified by the schools themselves, linking teacher evidence-based practice to student outcomes. Results highlighted a shift away from a "special needs" delivery approach to disabilities, towards one that emphasizes collaboration, critical reflection and evidence-gathering for the purpose of informing instructional of organizational practices. Improvements in student outcomes were reported in all schools but value-added analysis indicates that conditions in the school context contributed to the better-than-expectedimprovement in two of the schools.

ASSESSMENT METHODS FOR INCLUSIVE SCHOOL:

Formative assessment

The aim of formative assessment is to facilitate learning choosing which activities to prioritise. It is integrated into teachingand incorporated into learning. Formative assessment contributes to enhancing learning, informing the teacher of the improvements that occur regarding the career, success and/or the difficulties of the pupil. The formative assessment has a double aim:

- encourages the pupil to take charge of his/her own achievements
- helps the teacher to assess his/her own pedagogy and actions taken

Formative assessment is a tool for education , a tool for training - where the aim is to improve learning – and of regulation. Formative assessment compares the abilities of the pupil with the expected competence. It analyses the intermediate aims, the prerequisites, working methods and so on. Decisions are made strictly pedagogical where the teacher may modify his/her method and the pupil may modify his/her way of accomplishing the task. The formative assessment finds that pupils' errors can be instructive for them. Formative assessment is a tool for regulation which:

- follows each activity informs both teacher and pupil on the degree of ability achieved
- allows to precisely point out where the individual difficulties lay

- determine which pupils need support in order to progress
- allows learning to be adapted to the pace and to the ability of the pupil

The strategies for formative assessment:

- the organisation of learning based around the competences: basic competences, final competences, transversal competences
- the formulation of the aim of learning: abilities to be reached in terms of knowledge, expertise or know-how
- communication with the pupil about the aim and content of their education: this communication is often motivated toward developing the pleasure of learning and gaining knowledge
- the practice of differentiated pedagogy: detect the way to learn, the mental mechanism, errors when learning,organise support
- the process of observation, a significant indicator able to measure results and progress.
- the constructionof the assessment's criterion contributes to a successful outcome
- thedevelopment of anassessment strategy that can measure precisely what is learnt, using various and appropriate techniques of questioning
- Interdisciplinary procedures
- the promotion of self-assessment by the pupil

Self-assessment helps the pupil to know him/her would like to accomplish.

The way in which to acquire knowledge is diversified. The strategies of remediation are also diversified, sometimes concerning the contents, sometimes in the way to learn, sometimes both.

It is often necessary to:

- take a pleasure in learning in order to withstand psychological or emotional problems

- draw attention to the qualities and the abilities of the pupil to in order to move remediation into a positive condition

It is important to understand that we do not teach to assess but we assess to teach. The important point of formative assessment is to make the pupil an actor in his/her own learning.

Certificate (or summative) assessment

Certificate or summative assessment is a method of assessment that evaluates the abilities of the pupil and whether these abilities meet the basic requirements of the programme. It is also applied in adjusting the level of studies and in graduation. This assessment must be coherent, respect the aims of learning and evaluate expected abilities and the conditions under which they are used. The certificative assessment is the final assessment which also recognisessocial competences and is given
at the end of the student's schooling including the formativeassessment and remediation.

Instead of referring to the normal or comparing the abilities of a pupil with those of others, it is appropriate to refer to the criterion and compare the result with the requiredstandard. To be considered as a criterion the element must follow the definition to the competences.

With certificativeassessment, it is necessary to select a subject of assessment informing the pupil of the precise aim of the test. The test must contain exactly what is in the aim as each word used in the definition of the aim and in the test is important.

A test must contain two qualities. It must be valid (examine what it is supposed to examine) which can be attained with a precise definition of the competences. It must also be precise, meaning that a good test cannot give different results at different times.

The priorities for the certificative and summative assessment are:

- to be clear: the rules of assessment must be clear to everyone and the modalities must be in coherence with the learning and the formative assessment
- to be constant: all precaution must be taken to reduce the possibilities of error
- clarity: the test must be announced and the pupil correctly prepared The level of requirement must be precise.

To prepare for the certificative assessment the pupil must be given the opportunity to acquire the necessarycompetences in order to fulfill the task. During the assessment of a complex production, an analytical step with several criterionisnecessary. The precision of the criterion and the level of requirement will allow an objective assessment. To decide whethercompetencesare achieved or not, it necessary to define which level of the criterion is considered as a priority.

The certificative assessment is linked to the summative assessment. The summative assessment Gives a general evaluation of the abilities achieved. Itis an observation, a final assessment, an accumulative evaluation of what the pupil has learnt. When the summative assessment is complete it can be used for example in the school report. Summative assessment is oriented towards the complete process of learning and not on partial knowledge.

ASSESSMENT METHODS FOR INCLUSIVE SCHOOL :

Before a specialized evaluation of a student is conducted, pre-referral discussions by teachers

regarding the nature of the problem, and what possible modifications to instructions in the classroom

might be made are important. The child must be assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability such as health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academics performance, communicative status, and motor abilities.

An ideal assessment for LD is a long process requiring several sessions with a qualifiededucational psychologist. Apart from administering a battery of tests, the

psychologist also gathersrelevant information about the child from the teachers and school records. The assessment procedure for LD involves the following steps:

Parental Consent and Parent Interview

- Parent's consent must be obtained before evaluating the child. The academic, developmentaland medical history along with the linguistic usage and communications patterns of the childmust be obtained from the parents.
- The parent must be involved in the planning of the intervention program such as attending a resource room, provision of accommodation and modifications to the child.

Gathering Information from the Teachers/School

The psychologist must also observe the child in his/her school setting to know about the child's performance and behavior inthe class, and gain insights from the teacher. Review of previous grades will show the pattern of academic progress. These may throw light into the problem areas of the child. A student's current classroom performance canbe compared to Test scores.

Looking at Student Workbooks

Regrettably, in the present educational set up, very often the notebooks don't reflect the learningdifficultiesfaced by the child due to rote learningespecially when the child can easily copy from the blackboard. The examination papersmay give a clearer picture of the specific nature of difficulty.

It shows how the notebook may not reveal the difficulty only through collecting data through a variety of approaches(observation, interviews, test, curriculum-based assessment, etc.) and from various sources such as parents, teachers, peers, adequatepicture be obtained of the child's strengths and weaknesses. Synthesized, this information can be used to determine the specific nature of the child's special needs, whether the child needs special services and if so, to design an appropriate program.

A number of approaches being used recently include**curriculum-based assessments, task analysis, dynamics assessment, and assessment of learning style.**

These approaches yield rich information about students and ate especially important when assessing students fromculturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and therefore, are critical methods in the overall approach to assessment.

Interview with the Child

"An Interview should be a conversation with a purpose" with questions designed to collect information that "relates to the observed or suspected disability of the child".

A careful review of the student's school records or work samples help the assessment team identify patterns or areas of specific concern which may be focused on at the time of interview. The student too, may have much to say to illuminate the problem (Hoy & Gregg, 1904).

Testing :

Though increasingly controversial, most assessments for L.D include standardized tests.

There are two types of tests.

- **Criterion-referenced tests:** are scored according to a standard, or criterion decided by the teacher, the school, or the test publisher. An example of a criterion-referenced test might be a teacher-made spelling test where there are 20 words to be spelled and where the teacher has defined an "acceptable level of mastery" as 16 correct (or 80%).
- **Norm-referenced tests**: Scores on these tests are not interpreted according to an absolute standardor criterion (i.e., 8 out of 10 correct, etc.) but, on how the student's performance compares with that of the norm group (a large number of representatives of that age group). This helps evaluators determine

whether the child is performing ata typical level, below, or above that expected of a givenethnicity, socio-economic status, age, or grade. The drawback of this type of test is that the norms in different regions of a country will vary and too, the norms of the same region will change over a period of time. Hence in a diverse country like India, each area would have to develop its own norms which would need to be reviewed periodically.

Essentially, the tests for LD have two major components:

1. Testing for Potential: Performance Discrepancy.
2. Testing Processing Abilities.

A two-year discrepancy between potential and performance is an indicator of a possible LD.Validity of a significant discrepancy will be evaluated on acaseby case basis. The recommended Psycho-educational teats are discussed below under various heads:

1. **Intellectual Assessment:**

   Weschler Adult Intelligence Scale-Third Edition (WAIS-III), Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability.

2. **Achievement:** Recommended test include:

   Woodcock-Johnson Psycho166

   Educational Battery-Revised, Nelson Denny Reading Test, SATA.

3. **Cognitive Processing Abilities:**

   Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised (Part 1- Tests of Cognitive Ability),

   Weschler Memory Scales-Revised,

   Benton Visual Retention Test,

   Berry Viso-Motor Integration Test,

   Raven Colored Progressive Matrices,

   Rex Auditory-Verbal Learning Test,

   Bender Visual Motor Gestalt Test,

Halstead-Reitan Neuropsychological Test Battery,

Memory-For-Designs Test,

Nimhans Index

These tests would have to be modified and norms created for children who come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Exclusion of other disabilities as the primary cause of learning difficulties is essential. Such disabilities include;

- Mental retardation.
- Sensory deficits. Example: Visual and/or hearing impairment.
- Physical impairment.
- History of multiple education settings.
- Poor educational background or lack of prior learning.
- Cultural differences or lack of experience with the English language.

However, a learning disability may co-exist with the above. SLD (SPOKEN LANGUAGE DISORDER) being a language-based disorder, it is imperative that tests for both receptive and expressive languagebe included in the assessment procedures.

Co-Morbidity with ADHD

Manychildrenwith LDdevelop secondary inattention and behavioral difficulties; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which is characterized by developmentally-inappropriate inattention, hyperactivity and/or impulsivity, is often co-morbid with dyslexia. The two disorders occur simultaneously in 12% to 24% of individuals with dyslexia (Shaywitz, 2003). However, they do not appear to share a common cause (Doyle, 2001; Shaywitz, 2003). Under these circumstances, it becomes difficult to differentiate LD from a Primary ADHD.

Other Assessment Procedures

Curriculum-Based Assessment

Direct assessment of academic skills (Curriculum Based Assessment) is one alternative that has recently gained popularity. "Tests" of performance, in this case,

come directly from the curriculum. For example, a child may be asked to read from his or her reading book for one minute. Information on the accuracy and the speed of reading can then be compared with other students in the class.

CBA is quick and offers specific information about how a student may differ from his peers. Because the assessment is tied to curriculum content, it allows the teacher to match instruction to a student's current abilities and pinpoints areas where curriculum adaptations or modifications are needed. CBA provides information that is immediately relevant to instructional programming.

The merits of a CBA are lost in a system, with a rigid curriculum based mainly on memorization as is true in India where CBA may not be that right option.

Dynamic Assessment

The goal "is to explore the nature of learning, with the objective of collecting information to bring about cognitive change and to enhance instruction"

Dynamic assessment includes a dialogue or interaction between the examiner and the student. This interaction may include modeling the task for the student, giving the student prompts or cues as he/she tries to solve a given problem, asking what a student is thinking while working on the problem and giving praise or encouragement.

Learning Styles

We know thatall children have different learning styles. A learning style assessment, attempts to determine the elements that has an impact on a child's learning. Some of the common elements that may be included here would be the way in which the material is presented (i.e., visually, auditorily) in the classroom, the environmental conditions of the classroom (hot, cold, noisy, light, dark). The child's personality characteristics, the expectations for success that are held by the child and others. The response the child receives (for example, praise or criticism) and the type of thinking the child generally utilizes in solvingproblems (for example, trial and

error, analyzing). Identifying the factors that positively impact the child's learning are very valuable in developing effective intervention strategies.

Outcome-based Assessment

Outcome-based assessment involves considering, teaching and evaluating the skills that are important in real-life situations. Assessment, from this point of view, starts by identifying what outcomes are desired for the students (for example, being able to use public transportation).

The team then determines what competencies are necessary for the outcomes(for example, the steps or sub-skills the student needs to have mastered to achieve the outcome desired) and identifies which sub-skills the student has mastered and which he/she needs to learn

This types of assessment though generally used for the mentally challenged or autistic, may also be used for children in the general classroom with severe behavioral difficulties.

Assessment of the Culturally and Linguistically-Diverse

Because culture and language affect learning and behavior (Franklin, 1992) the school system any misinterpret what students know, how they behave, or how they learn. Students may appear less competent than they are, leading educators to appropriately refer them for assessment. Once referred, inappropriate methods may then be used to assess the students, finally leading to inappropriate conclusions and placement into special education.

There is also a great deal of research and numerous court decisions to support the fact that standardized tests (particularly intelligence and achievement tests) are often culturally and linguistically biased against students from backgrounds different from the majority culture. Most cognitive, language and academic measures are developed using standards met by the English-speaking majority. It is, therefore, imperative that the evaluation team collect the information about the student through interviews, observations, and approaches such as dynamic assessment.

Assessments in India

The National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bangalore has developed the index to assess children with LD. There are two levels of this index.

They are: Level 1 for children 5-7 years and

Level II for 8-12 years. The index comprises of the following tests:

a. Attention test (Number cancellation).
b. Visuo-motor skills (the Bender Gestalt test and the Developmental test of Visuo-Motor integration).
c. Auditory and Visual Processing (discrimination and memory).
d. Reading, writing, spelling and comprehension.
e. Speech and language including Auditory behavior (Receptive Language) and Verbal expression.
f. Arithmetic (Addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and fraction)

At the **Lokamanya Tilak M.G. Hospital, Sion, Mumbai,** the procedure for assessment of Specific Learning Disability involves the following:

a. Neurological assessment.
b. Vision and Hearing tests.
c. Analysis of school progress report.
d. I.Q. test.
e. Educational assessment.
f. Psychiatric assessment.
g. Case conference.
h. Counselling.

Most private institutions in India follow some, if not all of these Procedures. In our country where numbers often determine procedures, it would be beneficial to provide basic facilities for assessments within the educational setting. The reasons are overwhelming:

- Children experiencing delays or learning problems may be screened at the first level, provided with timely help and only those requiring further assessment would need to undergo further testing.
- Ideal assessment procedures being very elaborate, cannot be completed in a single session.
- Attending clinics and hospitals would be difficult for the parents from a lower socioeconomic background.
- Information can be easily gathered from within the school. Observation of the child in the educational setting would be preferable to those made in a clinic.
- The assessment team could include a psychologist, special teacher/educator, class teacher which, with input from the parent and child, would facilitate a comprehensive assessment of the child.
- Assessment procedures would include instructional planning, placement,and development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) appropriate to the child's special needs with a follow-up evaluation of student progress.
- Eligibility for special education services/ classroom and accommodations/ modifications is best determined by a knowledgeable school team. Given the lengthy assessment procedures, it is vital that proper pre-referral procedures are formulated for implementation. Teacher-training would avoid over-referral.

Behavioral assessments

- Behavior assessments look for causes of children's behavior issues.
- There are different types of behavior assessments.
- Teachers and parents often fill out questionnaires about the child being assessed.

Behavior assessments are different from tests that screen for learning issues. They don't have right or wrong answers. Instead, they look at how kids interact with their world. These assessments can identify behaviour patterns as well as reasons for the behavior. Often parents, teachers and other are asked to observe the kids and answer questions about them.

There's no single test for behavior issues. Evaluators use a few different tools to get an idea of what might be behind the issues. Some potential causes include developmental delays, mental health issues and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The information is also used to develop Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and treatment plans.

Here are some of the behavior assessments that are commonly used.

Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales

It measures how a child's daily living skills compare to those of other kids his age. Someone who knows the child well fills out a questionnaire or answers questions about him. This is usually a parent or teacher. Questions focus on the child's abilities in basic areas. These include communication, daily living, socialization and motor skills.

This test looks at a child's ability to function on a daily basis. It's helpful for diagnosing and classifying certain types of disorders. These include autism, Asperger's syndrome and developmental delays. It also helps determine how far a child a lagging behind his peers, and if there's reason for concern.

Conners Parent and Teacher Rating Scales

It presence and severity of behaviors related to ADHD. Parents and teachers fill out a brief multiple-choice questionnaire on how a child behaves. Older kids may also be given a questionnaire to fill out. Areas explored include inattention, hyperactivity, learning problem and social skills.

This screening test points out where further testing may be needed. It can help doctors diagnose ADHD. It can also helpthem to monitor how well medication or other therapies are working for kids who are already diagnosed.

Vanderbilt Assessment Scales

It measures the existence and severity of ADHD symptom. Also, other common behavioral concerns and how they might be affecting behavior and schoolwork. This test may be given after a more general assessment suffers that a child shows signs of ADHS. Parents and teachers are asked howoften they see those symptoms and other concerning behaviors. The choices are "never," occasionally," "often" and "very often." Some of the questions are related to focus issues and hyperactivity,If there are numerous answers of "often" and "very often," it could point to ADHD.

Behavior Assessment System for Children(BASC)

It measures various aspects of a child's behavior. A parent or teacher is given a broad range of questions about a child's behavior. That includes questions about his social skills, ways of thinking and ability to adapt. This far-reaching test is used to evaluate kids for a broad range of behaviorissues. Results help identify areas of specific concern. They also help narrow down the possibilities of what the problem might be.

Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist

What it measures: Emotional, behavioral and social development and abilities.

How it works: Parents and teachers get a list of about 100 statements that describe child behaviors. They then rare how "true" or "untrue" each statement is for the child being evaluated. There's a Child Behavior Checklist for preschoolers, as well as for older children.

What the scores mean: Test results can point to a number of behavioral and emotional issues. These include ADHD, depression, phobias and oppositional defiant disorder.

Barkley Home and School Situation Questionnaires

It measures a child's behavior at home and at school. Parents are asked to rate how a child behaves in 16 common home situations. Teachers are asked to do the same for 12 common school situations. To be officially diagnosed with ADHD, kids' symptoms must cause difficulties in two different areas of life. These two tests together can show that. It's helpful to learn as much as you can about the assessment process. You can also find out about tests that are used to assess academic and social skills. Together, you and your child's assessment team will find answers to important questions – your child's behavior. Then you can begin to help him make the most of all has to offer.

Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation/Assessment (CCE):

Education is goal directed and educational outcomes are judged in terms of goal attainment .Every educational programme should aim for the all round development of the personality of the child. Therefore, the learning experiences provided in the school should contribute toward the achievement of the desired goals. A teacher or an educational planner, while deciding about the content and the related learning experience f or an educational programme (i.e. a curriculum) should describe both scholastic and non- scholastic outcomes as desirable behavior of that programme.

What is Continuous and Comprehensive School based Evaluation?

With the development of total personality of students as purpose of education, evaluation has to up the responsibility of assessing the multi-dimension of student performance,

- So the coverage of both scholastic and non-scholastic aspect of the pupils' development i, tin important component of scheme of evaluation.
- Comprehensive and continuous evaluation covers curricular areas, personal and social qualities, interests, attitudes, values, proficiency in co-curricular activities and the health status of the students.
- **Scholastic and non-scholastic domain:**

The desirable behavior related to the students 'knowledge and understanding in subjects and his ability to apply it in an unfamiliar situation are described as objectives in scholastic domain. The desirable behavior related to students 'attitudes, interest, personal and social qualities and physical health are described as objectives in non-scholastic domain.

The process of assessing the students' progress in achieving objectives related to scholastic and non-scholastic domain is called comprehensive evaluation.it has been observed that the scholastic elements such as knowledge and understanding of the facts, concepts, principle,etc. of a subject and thinking skills are assessed. The non-scholastic elements are either altogether excluded from the evaluation process of they are not given adequate attention. For making the evaluation comprehensive, the scholastic and non-scholastic both should be given equal importance. Simple and manageable means of assessment of non-scholastic aspects of growth must be included in a comprehensive evaluation scheme.

In Nation Policy on Education (NPE) document 1986 and as modified in 1992 also it is mentioned that the scheme of evaluation should covers all learning experiences of scholastic subjects and non-scholastic areas.

Functions of Comprehensive and Continuous evaluation:

* Continuous evaluation helps in regular assessment to the extend and degree of students progress (ability and achievement with reference to specific scholastic and non-scholastic areas).

* Continuous evaluation serves to diagnose weakness and permit the teacher to ascertain an individual pupil's strengths and weakness and his needs.

* It helps the teacher to organize effective teaching strategies.

* Continuous and comprehensive evaluation ascertains areas of aptitude and interest. It helps in identifying changes in attitude, character and value pattern.

* It helps in making decisions for the future, regarding choices of subjects, courses, and careers.

* It provides information/report on the progress of students in scholastic and non - scholastic areas and thus help in predicting the future successes of the teacher.

Difference between NRT and CRT:

NRT	CRT
• Measures a student's performance in comparison to the performance in a larger group • May contain content not yet learned • Not aligned to content standards • Used to rank test takers to a national sample • Sort and rank students on the bell curve • Not all students can be proficient • Students receive a percentile ranking • No state involvement in development	• Measures a student's performance based on mastery of a specific set of standards • Questions are alligned to content standards • Content is grade level specific • Used to demonstrate mastery of skill • Scores are reported against cut scores • All students can be proficient • Students area not compared to others, but to performance on the standards • Depending on the vendor, state

• Typically multiple choice with little to no writing • Writing is limited • May not contain written response for math	educators may be heavily involved in the development and review process • Contain a mixture of item types multiple choice, multi-select • Writing is included on various levels • Open response items for math

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