Abstract

The inclusive education movement has been identified as one of the most “important developments in contemporary special education” (Artiles, Harris-Murri & Rostenberg, 2006, p.260). Assisted by major legal policies in the United States and the United Kingdom, inclusive education now is a part of the global discourse on education and is visible in several key international policy documents (Peters, 2007). Recent literature on inclusive education draws attention to problems created by exporting inclusive education to parts of the Global South (Kamenopoulou, 2018; Richard, 2014). This literature draws attention to various problems including the tendency to ignore local understandings of disability, the contradictions between policy and practice, and the creation of further segregation of children with disabilities (Kalyampur, 2008). This study focuses on local understandings of inclusive education in Pakistan. Data for this study are being collected with the use of qualitative methodology where the focus is on the subjects’ frame of reference (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006) and the insider’s perspective (Fetterman, 1988). In-depth interviews will be conducted with five administrators and five teachers across two inclusive English medium private schools in Pakistan. Preliminary themes indicate local definitions of inclusive education, current barriers, as well as alternative approaches.

Current Status & Implementation of Inclusive Education in Pakistan

1959-Commission on National Education-Provided for special educators and vocational education for students with disabilities (Singal, 2015)
1972-Education policy-Provided funds for special education services (Hassan, Parveen & Nisa, 2010)
2002-The National Policy for Persons with Disability -Reiterated the rights based approach. Drew attention to the need for inclusive education (Hassan, Parveen & Nisa, 2010)
2011-Pakistan ratified The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), making it a legal obligation to end segregation of students with disabilities from the mainstream
2012-Right to Free and Compulsory Education Bill

Study

Objectives: This study focuses on local understandings of inclusive education in Pakistan. Data for this study will be collected with the use of qualitative methodology where the focus is on the subjects’ frame of reference (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006) and the insider’s perspective (Fetterman, 1989). The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To understand how administrators and in-service teachers define and understand inclusive education in Pakistan
- To identify barriers to the implementation of inclusive education in Pakistan
- To articulate and identify current supports provided to students with disabilities and existing local strategies to implement inclusive education in Pakistan

Participants: In-depth interviews will be conducted with five administrators and five teachers across two inclusive English medium private schools in Pakistan.

Methods: Subjects in this research include teachers, administrators, and staff of inclusive schools on their experiences, beliefs, and practices implemented for people with disabilities in Pakistan as well as their opinions on the integrative model.

Interview Questions:
1. What is your role and experience as a teacher in working with students with disabilities in Pakistan?
2. How did you come to work in this field?
3. What does inclusive education mean to you?
4. What inclusive practices have you observed in your school? What inclusive practices do you use in your classroom?
5. What are some of the barriers to implementing inclusive education in schools?
6. What resources are available for your students? To what extent are these resources and supports effective?
7. What kinds of support do teachers need in order to implement inclusive education?

Emerging Themes

- Segregated model of disability followed within classrooms, despite the rhetoric of inclusion
- Teachers are not equipped to teach all students; More need for teacher training
- Lack of resources
- Inclusive Education programs are dependent on donations and the charity model rather than federal funding
- Concerns expressed by parents of non-disabled students
- More need for community education

Challenges toward Implementing Inclusive Education in Pakistan and the Global South

- Distance between local understandings and the Northern discourse on Inclusion (Rao & Kalyampur, 2020)
- Absence of professional development opportunities and teacher training (Haidar, 2008)
- Quaysim, Lasi Ramp; Rafique 2013; Sharma, Shankat; Furlonger, 2014
- Inflexible curricula (Hameed and Manzoor, 2016)
- Limited resources and infrastructure (Quaysim, Lasi Ramp; Rafique 2013)
- Variability in attitudes towards disability (Quaysim, Lasi Ramp; Rafique 2013)
- Significant number of children are out of school (Hameed & Manzoor, 2016; UNESCO, 2014)
- Lack of access to schooling because of distance and other factors (Hameed & Manzoor, 2016; UNESCO, 2014)
- Education in the hands of provinces so great variability (Ahmed 2011)
- Contradictions between policy and practice (Rao & Kalyampur, 2020)
- Significant number of children were not in school at all (Singal, 2015)
- Significant number of children are out of school (Hameed & Manzoor, 2016; UNESCO, 2014)
- Education in the hands of provinces so great variability (Ahmed 2011)
- Contradictions between policy and practice (Rao & Kalyampur, 2020)

References


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