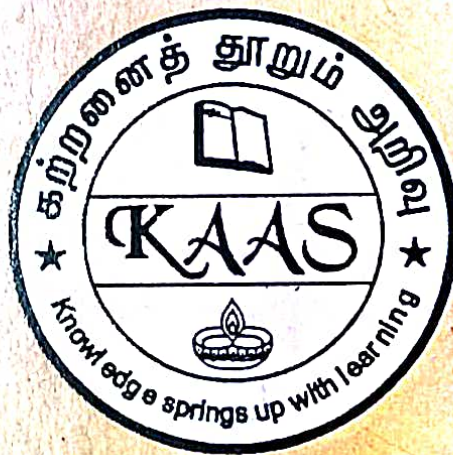


Research Papers :

ISBN 978-81-909710-7-2

Second National Conference of Teacher Educators

# **TEACHER EDUCATORS FOR NATIONAL REGENERATION**



Estd. 1996

**KANNIYAKUMHARI ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES (KAAS)**

**A MULTI - DISCIPLINARY RESEARCHERS' FORUM**



# TEACHER EDUCATORS FOR NATIONAL REGENERATION

## *Editors*

M. Sadanandan  
B. William Dharmaraja  
S.P. Denisia

## *Joint Editors*

C. Amose  
S. Kumaresan  
A. Philo Fragrance  
M. Sundarraj

## *General Editors*

N. Sam Raj  
Y. Dharma Raj

## *Chief Editor*

E. James R. Daniel



**KAAS PUBLICATIONS  
2010**

## KNOWLEDGE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION: A MUST FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

\* S. PRAVEEN KUMAR AND \*\* B. WILLIAM DIARMA RAJA

\* Ph.D. Scholar, \*\* Assistant Professor, Department of Education,  
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University,  
Tirunelveli - 627 012

### ABSTRACT

Education is widely recognized as the key to the empowerment of every section of society. The success or failure of any educational programme depends upon the quality, commitment and enthusiasm of the teacher concerned. Successful teaching involves keeping in touch with the latest trends and modern theories and practices in education. It is teacher education which moulds the teachers to play their role effectively, keeping constantly in view the special needs and unique abilities of their students.

Often teachers come across pupils with different intellectual or physical disabilities which hinder their academic progress. Special education is instruction designed for students with such disabilities or talents or gifts who have special learning needs. Special teaching facilities are very much needed to meet the personal and social needs of these children. Special education is specialized in nature since it needs special aids and special learning environment for making the special students learn.

Teacher educators play a pivotal role in the progress of a knowledge society. They need to be exposed to different kinds of studies and training undertaken by experts in special education. They have to train the teacher trainees on how to deal with children who need special care and attention. The teacher trainees need to be made to realize the significant parts that audio-visual aids and other multimedia equipment play in enhancing the levels of comprehension for these learners. Also teacher educators have a role to turn schoolteachers into good counsellors for the context

of their interaction with administrators, parents and peers of these children. Creation of special educational settings empowers the differently abled to cultivate their skills and make their contribution to society like their peers. The entire responsibility lies in the hands of the teacher educators who need to experts in the area of special education so as to train the prospective teachers for the betterment of the nation.

### Introduction

Education is widely recognized as the key to the empowerment of every section of society. For the full educational flowering of an individual, there needs to be educators for their academic growth. The success or failure of any educational programme depends upon the quality, commitment and enthusiasm of the teacher concerned. Successful teaching involves keeping in touch with the latest trends and modern theories and practices in education. To achieve this, a teacher should always be a learner.

It is teacher education which moulds the teachers to play their role effectively, keeping constantly in view the special needs and unique abilities of their students. It provides them with the theoretical background of the philosophical, psychological and sociological aspects of education to do their best in their school. Teachers are expected to maintain a high standard in all their instructional activities. It is the duty of teacher educators in colleges of education to provide the student teachers with the latest thinking on how classroom instruction can be imparted to children with diverse learning needs.

### Special Education

One sees these days not only diversity on cultural or linguistic fronts but also on the needs of children attending schools with varying abilities or disabilities. Often teachers come across pupils with different intellectual or physical disabilities which hinder their academic progress. Among intellectual disabilities, one can name various disorders which hamper the learning of students like autism, attention deficit disorder, dyslexia or dyscalculia. Physical impairments that



impede instructional progress in a normal environment are visual, hearing or speech disabilities. Special education is the way out for these differently abled children.

The term 'special education' includes all aspects of education which are applied to exceptional children – physical, mental, disadvantaged and gifted children. It includes all those aspects of education which are specific in addition to the regular programme for all children (Sharma, 2008). It is different from general education in that it is so designed as to cater to the special requirements of children who need to be assisted to catch up with the rest of the class through the use of special gadgets or tools and instructional strategies that seek to bring out the best in them.

Special education is instruction designed for students with disabilities or talents or gifts who have special learning needs. Today's special education takes account of the fact that different students have different special needs. Some need help in dealing with the social and psychological problems they face as a result of their exceptionality. Special educational programmes not only challenge them intellectually, but also help them deal with their feelings of alienation. Other exceptional students need special services because of what they are not able to do, because some disabling condition limits their ability to learn in the typical educational programme (Yssedyke & Algozzine, 2006).

The focus of special education is on learning, not just to pass exams, but to make the child a more effective and independent learners (Krithika, 2009). The students with special learning needs require a modification of school practices or special educational services to develop to maximum capacity. As backward children and talented children need specific facilities for their development, educationists stress the importance of special education for them (Prameela, 2005). Special teaching facilities are very much needed to meet the personal and social needs of these children.

Special education is quite vast in its objective, methodology and scope. It is goal-directed in the sense that it always carries purposeful

instructions and well thought, well planned learning experiences to the children to help them in the realization of their needs and attaining maximum adjustment and progress as possible. It is also specialized in nature since it needs special teachers, special aids and special learning environment for making the special students learn. Also it is universal in the sense that it covers the needed education for each and every type of exceptional or special individual, without having any discrimination on the basis of age, caste, colour, sex, language, culture, socio-economic conditions, regionality or nationality (Mangal, 2007).

### Knowledge of Special Education for Teacher Educators

The destiny of a nation lies in the hands of a teacher. From this it is evident that teacher educators play a pivotal role in the progress of a knowledge society. Teacher educators need to be providers of not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills so as to equip them with the necessary inputs to deal with the special learning problems of children at various levels of schooling. So teacher educators must be exposed to different kinds of studies and training undertaken by experts in special education. They gain this exposure not only through reading or study but also through seminars, symposia, refresher courses or national and international conferences held for the dissemination of such knowledge. They also need to be lifelong researchers and do innovative experiments to corroborate the ideas they come out with.

The curriculum for teacher education should also be revised. At present, there are no specific provisions in the form of trained teacher educators, resource materials, and standardized inputs on learners with special educational needs in the in-service programmes of District Institutes of Teacher Education (DIETs). In the pre-service programme, the inputs are provided only one optional paper or one unit in a compulsory paper (NCERT, 2009). It is necessary that special education should be included as a compulsory subject in the teacher education curriculum.

The dynamics of teaching has changed with the times. It is necessary that teachers have to change their roles and understand

the psychology of every children and identify the challenges faced by them. Various educational services may help dyslexic and dyscalculic learners to overcome their problems. Special educational programmes can be designed to meet the special needs of these learners. In addition, these educationally disabled students need a great deal of structured practice and immediate corrective feedback to develop their skills (Kumar & Raja, 2009 b). So the teacher educators have to train the student teachers on how to emphasize with children who need special care and attention.

Using multimedia instructional strategy or computer-assisted instruction may facilitate the process of mathematical exploration in disabled learners. By these specialized approaches to teaching, most disabled learners can be helped to learn normally (Kumar & Raja, 2008). The student teachers need to be made to realize the significant parts that audio-visual aids and other multimedia equipment play in enhancing the levels of comprehension for these learners.

Recognition of a pupil's learning disability and the creation of a congenial atmosphere help the disabled learners to lessen the severity of their disability. Today's special educators are called upon to create this kind of protective learning environment in a modern school that seeks to promote inclusive education. Teachers need to provide their students with positive role models and consistently treat individual differences and needs with patient acceptance and special effort. There needs to a healthy interaction between the teachers and parents to identify the special needs of these children (Kumar & Raja, 2009 a). It is the responsibility of teacher educators to turn schoolteachers into good counsellors for the context of their interaction with administrators, parents and even the peers of these children.

### Conclusion

Creation of special educational settings paves the way to empower the differently abled to cultivate their skills and make their contribution to society like their peers. If schoolteachers gain the insight into the difficulties their pupils face and help them bring out their best, these

children can be enabled to integrate into the rest of society and achieve positions of eminence. The entire responsibility lies in the hands of the teacher educators who needs to experts in the area of special education so as to train the prospective teachers for the betterment of the nation.

### REFERENCES

- Krithika.R. "Way back to childhood" *The Hindu Magazine (Thiruvananthapuram Edition)*, January 18 (2009): 1.
- Kumar, S. Praveen & Raja, B.W.D. "Minimising Dyscalculic Problems Through Visual Learning". *The Primary Teacher*, 24, no.3, 4 & 1 (2008): 87-93.
- Kumar, S. Praveen & Raja, B.W.D. "High Self-esteem as a Coping Strategy for Students with Learning Disabilities". *i-manager's Journal of Educational Psychology*, 2, no.4 (2009 a): 14-19.
- Kumar, S. Praveen & Raja, B.W.D. "Treating Dyslexic and Dyscalculic Students". *i-manager's Journal of Educational Psychology*, 3, no.1 (2009 b): 7-14.
- Mangal.S.K. *Educating exceptional children: An introduction to Special Education*. New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India Private Limited, 2007.
- Position Papers of National Focus Groups on National Concerns Volume III*. New Delhi: National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), 2009.
- Prameela, A. "Learning Disability: A Complex Phenomenon", *Edutracks*, 4, no.10 (2005): 9-12.
- Sharma, R.A. *Fundamentals of Special Education*. Meerut: Lal Book Publications, 2008.
- Ysseldyke, James. & Algozinne, Bob. *Special Education*. New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers, 2006.