



People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
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**Lecture Notes in the Course: Inclusion of Individuals
with Special Needs**
**Level: Third Year – Specialization: Special
Education**

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The academic year 2023/2024
Inclusion of Individuals with Special Needs

Course Topics:

First:

1. Terms Related to Inclusion and Its Concept
2. Objectives of Inclusion
3. Foundations of the Philosophy of Inclusion
4. Justifications for Inclusion
5. Society's Attitudes Toward the Idea of Inclusion

Second: Inclusion Requirements and Challenges

1. Inclusion Requirements
2. Determinants of Inclusion Success
3. Challenges of Inclusion
4. Conditions for Successful Inclusion

Third: Forms and Levels of Inclusion

1. Forms of Inclusion
2. Levels of Inclusion – Elements of Inclusion
3. Other Inclusion Systems
4. Benefits of Inclusion
5. Drawbacks of Inclusion

First: Terms Related to Inclusion:

- Introduction:

In the mid-20th century, as criticism of the segregation system grew, special education began shifting its focus from isolating individuals with special needs (SN) to integrating them with their peers. This approach emphasizes “connection, not separation” between the communities of typical and atypical individuals, aiming to integrate persons with disabilities into society, ensuring their functional participation and their “belonging” as active citizens.

This trend was reinforced by laws guaranteeing the rights of individuals with special needs. For instance, the U.S. General Education Law, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975), emphasized that individuals with disabilities have the right to receive appropriate and free education through individualized educational programs delivered in the least restrictive environment possible, whether in special institutions or inclusive settings. In the UK, the Social Services Office of the Royal Court issued an educational act that included a chapter on individuals with disabilities. This legislation called upon learning areas in England

and Wales to ensure that anyone eligible for special education services, including individuals with disabilities, receives these services in an appropriate setting determined by specialized committees that include the child's guardian. (Shash, 2016, p. 1).

The global community adopted this inclusion-oriented approach, as reflected in the slogan of the International Year of Disabled Persons (1981): “Equality and Full Participation” and the concept of “A Society for All.” These concepts underscore society's responsibility toward individuals with disabilities and advocate transforming the community to meet the needs of all its members. The Universal Declaration of Education for All crowned this phase's efforts.

In recent years, there has been a growing call to adopt necessary measures to protect persons with disabilities from discrimination and enable them to access and benefit from various societal activities and services. This inclusive approach has spread across many societies, encompassing European countries and Canada, while also expanding into some third-world countries like Malaysia and India. This trend emerges in response to the increasing number of individuals requiring this form of education. (Shash, 2016, p. 62).

1- Terms Related to Inclusion:

1-1- Deinstitutionalization: The term deinstitutionalization refers to the process of moving individuals with disabilities away from specialized or residential institutions and placing them in open environments with minimal restrictions on their freedoms. This approach aims to provide care, training, and rehabilitation that enable them to live with their typical peers.

Mansour (1994) defines deinstitutionalization as advocating for the abandonment of institutions for individuals with disabilities, offering an environment resembling a family setting for their care, and striving to provide daily living conditions that closely resemble those of the broader society. It also emphasizes the provision of comprehensive rather than isolated services.

*Deinstitutionalization further entails enabling individuals with special needs to access education that caters to their unique requirements in regular schools instead of specialized institutions, using various approaches. It also involves exerting maximum effort to facilitate the participation of children with disabilities in all educational and community activities. (Shash, 2016, p. 38).

1-2- Normalization:

Normalization refers to providing children with special needs with experiences of ordinary life, both inside and outside the classroom. This approach allows them opportunities to observe the behavior of others and interact with them under normal conditions and circumstances. (Shash, 2016, p. 39).

McMillan (1982) defines normalization as offering individuals with special needs all the patterns and conditions of daily life that are as close as possible to the mainstream of society. This includes greater interaction with others through participation in community activities such as parties and visits when the individual's condition permits. McMillan suggests

distinguishing between environmental normalization (of the setting) and individual normalization.

***Environmental Normalization:** This involves developing housing, schools, and services available in the community to make them more suitable and aligned with cultural standards. It also emphasizes creating an environment free from any stimuli that might highlight the individual's disability, causing feelings of shame.

***Individual Normalization:** This refers to equipping individuals with the necessary skills to assume social roles and responsibilities. Thus, normalization toward ordinariness is a process based on viewing the individual with a disability as a "normal person" and recognizing their right to grow in an environment that is as typical as possible.

- Proposals for Implementing Normalization Principles:
 1. Planning and managing services for individuals with disabilities in a manner consistent with the cultural standards and patterns of society.
 2. Allowing persons with disabilities to choose a normal daily life system (such as clothing, food, and interactions) and life cycle activities that are age-appropriate, providing experiences that foster their maturity.
 3. Respecting their desires and choices and granting them normal economic and civil privileges.
 4. Providing them with education, training, and care that is as close as possible to typical standards in scale and appearance.
 5. Offering comprehensive services rather than isolated ones whenever possible.

1-3- Unification of the Educational Track:

In 1975, Kauffman, Gottlieb, Agard, and Kirk introduced the term "unification of the educational track," defining it as "the temporary educational and social integration of qualified individuals with special needs into the educational programs alongside their typical peers in regular school classrooms. This is achieved by designing organized and programmed educational plans that specify the responsibilities of those overseeing the program and address educational and administrative aspects."

This definition highlights the following elements:

1. The location where the child will be placed with their typical peers.
2. The duration of the integration (temporary integration, with reports emphasizing that the child should spend 50% or more of the school day in the regular classroom).
3. The activities the child will engage in (educational integration) and the interactions they will have during the school day (social aspect).

4. The responsibilities of teachers and other staff members to ensure consistent service delivery.

*The unification of the educational track also refers to a service provided to children with disabilities within the regular academic program. In this approach, the regular school, consisting of classrooms shared by both typical children and children with disabilities, replaces specialized schools for children with disabilities.

1-4- Regular Education Initiative (REI): The concept of the Regular Education Initiative is based on the assumption that children with mild disabilities should be considered a shared responsibility of all teachers, rather than solely the responsibility of special education teachers. Instead of creating or providing programs that exclude students with mild disabilities from the general classroom environment for specialized instruction, general education classrooms are modified and adapted to meet the diverse needs of learners.

Thus, the Regular Education Initiative represents a step closer to inclusive education than the concept of the unification of the educational track. This is because it focuses on modifying the general educational environment to make it natural and supportive for students with mild disabilities. However, it does not achieve the comprehensiveness of full inclusion because it fails to meet the needs of students with severe disabilities. (Shash, 2016, p. 41).

1-5- Inclusive Education: Inclusive education refers to accommodating all students in a shared educational environment. It embodies a set of values and practices that acknowledge the wide range of human diversity in classrooms. Inclusive education ensures that students with disabilities are educated in age-appropriate general education classrooms in their local schools. They receive quality instruction, interventions, and support that enable them to succeed in the curriculum.

Schools and classrooms operate on the principle that students with disabilities possess basic competencies similar to their peers without disabilities. This approach allows all students to fully participate in classroom activities and the broader school community. (Al-Zreiqat, 2020, pp. 54-55).

1-5- Integration and Inclusion:

First: The Concept of Inclusion The term "inclusion" refers to the coordination between components to form a unified and integrated whole. In educational systems, it describes merging separate systems into more integrated ones for individuals who were previously provided with segregated services or systems due to factors such as gender, ethnicity, or other reasons.

In the field of special education, the term "inclusion" generally refers to the integration of social and educational activities for educable children with intellectual disabilities within regular educational programs alongside their peers with typical abilities.

Kauffman (1981) defines inclusion as “placing mildly disabled children in regular primary schools, with measures taken to ensure their benefit from the educational programs provided in these schools.”

Turnbull (1982) defines inclusion as the social and educational integration of children with special needs and typically developing children in regular classrooms, for at least part of the school day. This definition highlights the presence of the student in regular school classrooms for part of the day, as well as socially integrated interactions. (Shash, 2016, p. 42).

Madden and Slavin (1983) view inclusion as: "Allowing children with special needs to spend as much time as possible in regular classrooms, while providing them with special services if needed. It also involves modifying regular curricula as much as possible to address the needs of this group of children and equipping regular classroom teachers with the support they require."

Mansour (1994) emphasizes that inclusion entails educating and caring for children with disabilities alongside their peers in environments that are as typical as possible.

Inclusion, therefore, refers to the integration of children with special needs into formal educational settings and programs unless their challenges are so severe that they cannot adapt to regular programs. (Shash, 2016, p. 43).

Some specialists believe that the term "integration" (an American concept) is more appropriate to describe the approach of inclusion. Integration involves adapting the social, physical, and professional aspects of individuals with disabilities to the broader society while considering the specific needs of each individual and selecting suitable environmental conditions.

Integration can occur in service delivery through various means, such as:

1. Providing seats in classrooms to accommodate individuals with moderate and mild disabilities who are capable of learning and training.
2. Including individuals with disabilities and their families in trips organized by associations and schools, free of charge if necessary or at a symbolic fee.
3. Training and preparing individuals with disabilities for certain professions, such as printing work, within the premises of associations and sheltered workshops.
4. Employing a percentage of individuals with intellectual disabilities within associations.

1-6- Accommodation and Full Inclusion:

Sadiq (1998) uses the term "accommodation" instead of "full inclusion." Accommodation, a term gaining popularity today, implies actions such as "including," "encompassing," or "absorbing" the individual as part of the group. The educational application of this concept means that individuals with disabilities should be included, absorbed, or integrated into the classroom. This approach has been adopted by the American system since the 1970s,

supported by laws and regulations that emphasize the principle of full inclusion, integrating individuals with special needs into the general educational system.

In this sense, inclusion means many things for individuals with special needs, such as: The absence of isolation, Acceptance by society, The possibility of being treated like others, Having friends and emotional lives, Making tangible contributions to the community, Enjoying the freedom to participate and move like anyone else, Pursuing their education alongside their typical peers.

2- Objectives of Inclusion:The inclusion system aims to achieve several objectives, the most important of which are:

- 1. Eliminating the stigma associated with special needs:** Individuals with special needs, their families, teachers, and those connected to them may face stigmatization linked to the term "disability." Therefore, it is necessary to modify the discriminatory attitudes held by members of society toward children enrolled in special education programs. Inclusion programs aim to change and adjust these negative attitudes among staff in regular schools into positive attitudes toward such groups.
- 2. Addressing the growing number of children with special needs:** This objective necessitates providing equal and equitable educational opportunities for all children with disabilities, allowing them to participate in public life. It involves offering educational opportunities for the largest number of special education groups within regular schools, particularly for groups such as gifted children, children with mild intellectual disabilities, visual impairments, and hearing impairments. Many of these groups do not receive adequate educational services in special centers, schools, or institutions. (Shash, 2016, p. 47).
- 3. Reducing economic costs associated with establishing special education institutions:** Setting up schools and institutes for special education involves very high economic costs, including facilities, equipment, and qualified teachers, among other expenses.
- 4. Providing an educational solution to many attached educational problems:** The inclusion system encourages local schools to experiment with and deliver effective educational approaches to address persistent problems, aiming to achieve more constructive learning that brings together students with special needs. These efforts include focusing on enhancing the academic achievement of students with mild and moderate disabilities, as well as low-achieving non-disabled students.
- 5. Offering opportunities for typical students to interact closely with students with special needs:** Such interaction helps typical students understand the challenges faced by their peers with special needs, develop positive attitudes toward them, and support them in meeting life's demands.

3- Foundations of the Philosophy of Inclusion:

The philosophy of inclusion is grounded in the anticipated outcomes resulting from its implementation in all its forms:

1. **Eliminating the stigma associated with certain special education groups:** This aims to mitigate the negative social effects on certain special education groups and their families, associated with terms like "disability." (Shash, 2016, p. 48).
2. **Creating sufficient opportunities for individuals with special needs to adopt behaviors observed in their typical peers.**
3. **Modifying attitudes toward children with special needs:** Inclusion programs work to change and improve the attitudes of families, school staff, and peers toward these children.
4. **Providing social interaction experiences:** Interaction between individuals with special needs and their typical peers increases the chances of social acceptance from the latter group.
5. **Offering suitable educational opportunities for learning among typical students and those with special needs:** This includes different teaching and assessment methods that promote sound academic, social, and psychological growth.
6. **Providing educational opportunities to the largest possible number of individuals with special needs.**
7. **Reducing economic costs:** Inclusion minimizes the need to establish special education centers or institutions, which require facilities, specialized staff, transportation, and other resources.
8. **Fostering self-actualization in children with special needs:** Inclusion enhances their motivation toward education and helps them form healthy social relationships with others. (Shash, 2016, p. 49).

4- Justifications for Inclusion:

- **Ethical Justifications:** Inclusion encourages society to adopt a positive perspective toward individuals with disabilities. This view is based on the assumption that isolating individuals with disabilities promotes the development of negative attitudes, such as segregation, guilt, anxiety, and shame. In contrast, inclusion creates opportunities for realistic social attitudes, such as recognizing the existence of children with special needs and seeking solutions through establishing special education centers and enrolling them in these institutions. (Shash, 2016, p. 50).
- **Legal and Legislative Justifications:** Many laws and legislative systems affirm the right of children with special needs to receive healthcare, educational, and social services similar to their typical peers in the least restrictive educational environments. This aligns with human rights in the context of education for all, supported by organizations such as

the International Labour Organization, World Health Organization, UNESCO, and UNICEF to ensure the care of these children.

The United Nations issued the Convention on the Rights of the Child, with Article 2 emphasizing the "necessity of non-discrimination based on disability," Article 6 affirming the "need to maximize the potential of individuals with disabilities," and Article 29 underscoring the "importance of inclusive education and full participation in community culture." Additionally, the Salamanca Statement (Spain, 1994) recommended that individuals with special needs be given the opportunity to enroll in general schools. (Shash, 2016, pp. 50-51).

- **Psychological and Social Justifications:** A report from the Regional Workshop on "Arab Resources for Care and Community Development" (Cyprus, 24-28 July 1998), organized by UNESCO, discussed the inclusion of children with special needs in early childhood programs. It highlighted three reasons for adopting an inclusive approach in education:
 1. Children have the right to learn together, free from discrimination, exclusion, or segregation due to their disabilities or learning difficulties.
 2. Segregation teaches children to fear each other, while inclusion fosters friendships, mutual respect, and prepares them to integrate into public life with a spirit of cooperation.
 3. Inclusive education has proven effective in improving academic achievement and developing social skills. (Shash, 2016, p. 51).

From the above, it can be concluded that inclusion helps transform negative societal attitudes toward individuals with special needs. It fosters societal laws and legislations that allow these individuals to receive equal educational and social care alongside their peers, promoting harmony and cooperation in interactions. This, in turn, enhances their academic performance and social skills.

5- Society's Attitudes Toward the Idea of Inclusion:

First: Supportive Attitudes Toward Inclusion

Proponents of inclusion advocate for and enthusiastically support it, emphasizing its role in changing societal attitudes and eliminating the isolation of children with special needs. Inclusion impacts the attitudes of teachers, students, and society as a whole. Supporters highlight several advantages of inclusion, including:

- Reducing effort.
- Lowering costs.
- Enhancing self-concept among individuals with disabilities.
- Avoiding the need for specialized equipment and tools to establish separate schools for each category of disability.

- Freeing the child and their family from the stigma associated with being in a special school.
- Reducing social and psychological disparities among children themselves. (Shash, 2016, p. 52).

Second: Opposing Attitudes Toward Inclusion

Some strongly oppose the idea of inclusion, believing that educating children in special schools is safer for them and provides greater benefits in terms of training programs. Opponents highlight the negative aspects of inclusion, such as:

- Widening the gap between typical and disabled children.
- Increasing the isolation of individuals with disabilities.
- A lack of sufficiently qualified specialists to assist in the inclusion process.
- Reinforcing a sense of failure in students, thereby reducing motivation and fostering a negative self-concept. (Shash, 2016, p. 53).

Third: Neutral Attitudes Toward Inclusion

Moderates hold a middle-ground view, neither favoring nor opposing any specific program. They believe that certain categories, such as individuals with severe intellectual disabilities, deaf individuals who cannot communicate through reading and writing, those with severe autism and communication deficits, and individuals with dual disabilities, are not easily integrated into regular classrooms. For such cases, they prefer providing specialized services through dedicated institutions.

Conversely, moderates support the inclusion of individuals with mild to moderate disabilities in regular schools and classrooms.

Second Axis: Requirements and Challenges of Inclusion

1- Requirements of Inclusion:

Qella (2007) notes that all students have the right to education in their local environments. To achieve this, societal culture and school policies must be restructured to foster learning. Regardless of the form or degree of inclusion in any setting, educating children with special needs in public schools presents numerous challenges for teachers and administrators. Thus, integrating children with special needs into mainstream schools is not an easy process and involves several essential requirements that must be addressed: (Shash, 2016, p. 90).

- Planning Inclusion Programs:

The first requirement for integrating children with special needs into public schools is proper planning for the implementation of inclusion programs. Educational inclusion for children with special needs alongside their typical peers must be based on continuous educational planning tailored individually for each child with a disability. This involves

clearly defining the responsibilities of the administrative and educational staff. Developing educational programs is a critical necessity, and the following fundamental factors must be considered:

- The existence of political will to initiate and sustain inclusive education efforts for children with special needs. Administrative leadership determines how or whether change occurs.
- Providing adequate resources.
- Maintaining a suitable ratio of children with special needs to typical children in the classroom, not exceeding two students.
- Considering developmental levels rather than chronological age.
- Determining the appropriate class size: the classroom should not be overcrowded, and the number of children should be limited.
- Carefully planning educational experiences: educational programs should address the strengths and weaknesses of the child and take into account their final developmental characteristics. These programs serve as a key to effective and appropriate learning experiences.
- Planning for the type of support sessions and activities outside the regular classrooms. (Shash, 2016, p. 92).

- **Identifying Educational Needs:**

One of the most critical requirements for inclusion is identifying the specific educational needs of students in general and those with disabilities in particular. This allows the preparation of appropriate educational programs to address these needs academically, socially, and psychologically within regular classrooms. Each child with a disability possesses unique cognitive abilities, physical capabilities, and psychological and social needs that may differ significantly from those of other children with disabilities. Simply placing the child in a regular school is not sufficient for achieving inclusion. While it may meet their social needs, it may not necessarily address their academic needs. (Shash, 2016, p. 94).

Therefore, implementing inclusion programs requires focusing on four main areas:

- Preparing and selecting appropriate teaching staff.
- Placing children in suitable classrooms, including enrolling children with disabilities and pairing them with non-disabled peers, or vice versa.
- Planning and implementing appropriate strategies: Educational assessment, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Classroom management rules, Environment adaptation, In-class planning, Plans and schedules, Playtime strategies, Strategies for inside and outside the classroom
- Collaboration between parents and school staff. (Shash, 2016, p. 94).

- **Preparing Educational Staff:**

It is essential to change the attitudes of all those involved in the educational process—teachers, principals, supervisors, and staff—and prepare them to understand the purpose of inclusion and how schools can achieve their goals in educating students with disabilities. This preparation ensures that they can positively contribute to the success of their integration into education and their preparation for societal inclusion.

Characteristics of successful inclusion projects include:

- Having leadership that is aware of and committed to the philosophy of inclusion.
- Improving communication and collaboration among project members.
- Providing sufficient resources, both in terms of personnel and technology.
- Offering adequate and qualitative training and supporting teachers in their work.

- **Teacher Preparation:**

Teachers dealing with students with special needs must receive sufficient training before implementing any inclusion program. A group of experienced teachers in special education should be prepared to work effectively with both typical and disabled students. This applies to both general education teachers and special education teachers. (Shash, 2016, p. 96).

***Responsibilities of General Education Teachers:**

General education teachers must be prepared and well-trained, possessing a high level of awareness and understanding. They should be knowledgeable about the information and facts related to students with special needs, consider their needs and requirements, empathize with them, understand their difficulties, and think about appropriate steps to support them. Teachers must work to integrate these students with their typical peers and change the negative attitudes of typical students toward their peers with special needs.

Additionally, teachers should be trained to use cooperative teaching strategies, master the implementation of individualized programs and their planning, and diversify classroom activities to provide opportunities for students with special needs to participate. Teachers should also inform parents and school administration about the teaching methods and strategies that will be used with these children.

Role of General Education Teachers in Inclusive Classrooms:

- Modifying curriculum content, even in a simplified or preliminary manner.
- Focusing on teaching essential skills to students with special needs that are not included in the regular training program.
- Providing a classroom environment different from the regular one.
- Adapting teaching strategies for students with special needs, emphasizing individualized instruction.
- Addressing the weaknesses experienced by students with special needs.
- Developing positive attitudes toward students with special needs.

- Coordinating effectively with special education teachers whenever necessary.
- Implementing curricula using effective methods and strategies. (Atifi et al., 2024, p. 255).

***Responsibilities of Special Education Teachers**

Special education teachers must receive proper and appropriate training to know how to make necessary adjustments in teaching methods to address the specific needs of students with disabilities in regular classrooms. They should also be skilled in guiding and advising typical students to help them accept their peers with special needs. Additionally, specialized teachers must be prepared to work with students with special needs both in regular classrooms and resource rooms.

Training programs should be developed for current special education teachers to assist regular school teachers in integrating students with disabilities. (Shash, 2016, p. 98).

Special education teachers are also responsible for implementing additional curricula for students with disabilities, which include a range of compensatory skills tailored to their needs, such as:

- Specialized academic skills.
- Sensory perception skills.
- Communication skills.
- Social adaptation skills.
- Daily life skills.

Given that the academic role of the special education teacher in the classroom is well-known, we will focus on their role in educational inclusion programs within regular schools, specifically in resource rooms and as itinerant teachers. This does not mean there is a difference between a resource room teacher and an itinerant teacher in terms of qualifications—they are the same person. The difference lies in the method of implementation.

There are two methods for providing support to students with mild disabilities in regular schools:

1. **First Method:** This method involves grouping students with disabilities in one school. The special education teacher delivers the designated educational program in a resource room, working exclusively in that school. In this case, the teacher is referred to as a "resource room teacher."
2. **Second Method:** This method involves grouping students with disabilities across several schools. The special education teacher visits these schools to implement the program, hence they are referred to as an "itinerant teacher." (Al-Sharif, 2011, pp. 278-279).

- Curriculum and Educational Program Development:

One of the essential requirements for inclusion is the preparation of appropriate curricula and educational programs that enable students with disabilities to learn in regular classrooms. Curricula must be developed to meet the educational needs of all children, ensuring that every child finds in the curriculum a learning tool that helps them grow at a pace consistent with their abilities, including gifted, disabled, and typical children, while also providing them with the necessary support when they face challenges that hinder their learning. (Shash, 2016, p. 99) .Conditions:

- **Strategies for Adapting and Modifying the Curriculum in Inclusive Schools:**

The terms "adaptation," "modification," "accommodation," and "differentiation" are used to refer to the process of preparing curricula and educational programs that provide opportunities for students with disabilities to learn in regular classrooms, ensuring they meet the educational needs of all children.

Westwood (2005) explains that the terms "adaptation" and "modification" share the same meaning: they refer to individual changes made within the inclusion process, focusing on altering what is expected for the student to learn. In contrast, the term "accommodation" refers to tools and methods that help students cope with the core instructional demands given to all other students in the classroom. Examples include sign language for the deaf and Braille for the visually impaired.

The term "differentiation," on the other hand, refers to teaching content in different ways based on the differences among learners.

- **Selecting an Inclusive School:**The selection of an inclusive school depends on the school environment, which must meet the following conditions:
- Proximity of the school to a special education center.
 - The surrounding environment of the school should be free from obstacles and barriers, with adapted traffic signals, sidewalks, barriers, courtyards, and streets.
 - Easy mobility within the school for students with physical and visual disabilities.
 - Availability of special transportation means that meet safety and security standards.
 - Readiness of the school principal and teachers to implement inclusion in their school.
 - A suitable and healthy school building that accommodates the needs of students with special needs.
 - Availability of educational services and activities.
 - Cooperation between the parent-teacher council to contribute to the success of the inclusion experience.
 - Preparing typical students by fostering an environment of acceptance and readiness to collaborate in achieving the program's goals.

- Preparing the parents of typical students by explaining the dimensions of the experience and its humanitarian, educational, social, and psychological aspects.(Shash, 2016, p. 106).
- **Adapting the School Environment:**Several considerations must be taken into account:
 - Adapting the school building.
 - Adapting the classroom.
 - Providing devices, tools, equipment, and aids tailored to the type and degree of the disability.
 - A child with a disability should not be transferred to a special classroom or isolated school unless their disability is severe, even with the use of aids and special services.
 - **Preparing and Involving Families for Inclusion:**The family plays a fundamental role in the inclusion process. They can participate in designing the child's individualized program and implementing it at home. Parents should attend meetings, review school records, and actively engage in shaping the philosophy of full inclusion. Additionally, they should be involved in making decisions that impact the educational programs of their children with disabilities.
 - **Preparing Students:**
 - **For general education students:**Sessions should be conducted to explain the concept of inclusion. Students should have the opportunity to discuss their questions, concerns, and interests. They are entitled to understand how, when, and why they need to assist their peers with disabilities.
 - **For students with special needs:**They need to understand the new changes and responsibilities that come with full inclusion and should be given adequate time to adapt to these changes. They may require additional education to prepare them for the regular classroom environment.
 - **Selecting Children Suitable for Inclusion:**There are specific criteria that children eligible for inclusion must meet:
 - The child with a disability must be of the same age group as typical students.
 - The child must be able to independently manage self-care and daily life skills.
 - The child must reside in the area surrounding the school and have access to safe transportation to and from the school.
 - The child must be selected by a specialized committee to assess their ability to follow the school's program and adapt to it.
 - The disability must not be severe or involve multiple disabilities.
 - The child must have the ability to learn in large educational groups when presented with new learning materials.

- The child must have the intellectual capacity necessary to function at the cognitive level present in the classroom.
- The child must be able to move around the classroom and participate in educational, recreational, and social activities.
- The child must have the desire to learn alongside their typical peers in the classroom.
- The child should have prior experience in integrated activities, whether in school, recreational settings, or social contexts.
- The parents must be willing to have their child educated in a regular classroom.
- The child must exhibit the emotional stability necessary to cope with the demands of a healthy environment.
- The child must be able to express their needs through writing, speech, or other methods.(Shash, 2016, p. 111).

2- Determinants of Inclusion Success:There are several determinants of successful inclusion that must be considered:

- **Avoiding excessive protection for both disabled and typical students:** Neither should be overprotected, as this could negatively affect the other. The disabled student should not be shielded out of fear for or from them, and this also applies to typical students.
- **Deepening the concept of inclusion beyond superficiality:** Inclusion should not merely involve integrating disabled students into the school; it should also extend to extracurricular activities. Genuine interaction should be encouraged, where typical students emotionally engage with their disabled peers through activities such as singing, playing, or sports competitions. Activities should be chosen based on the abilities of the disabled student to ensure a positive experience. For example, disabled students can participate in events like a school party with independent segments for them and mixed activities with their typical peers whenever possible.
- **Continuous monitoring and guidance:** The responsibility of the special education teacher goes beyond classroom instruction to include monitoring the interaction of disabled students with typical peers in various school activities. This ongoing follow-up helps ensure the success of inclusion. (Shash, 2016, p. 112).
- **Utilizing functional resources in the school:** All functional resources in the school should be accessible to all students without discrimination. Resources like bathrooms, libraries, laboratories, and playgrounds should not be segregated for specific groups. Even resources donated to support disabled students should benefit all, such as equipping a room with sports equipment, which should be available to all students.
- **Promoting the idea of inclusion:** Inclusion should not be limited to the school or educational field. It should be communicated to all segments of society through the school's community activities and other methods such as media. There should also be support and encouragement for universities and research centers to conduct studies on

societal attitudes toward disabled individuals and develop programs to either change or reinforce these attitudes with the help of media.

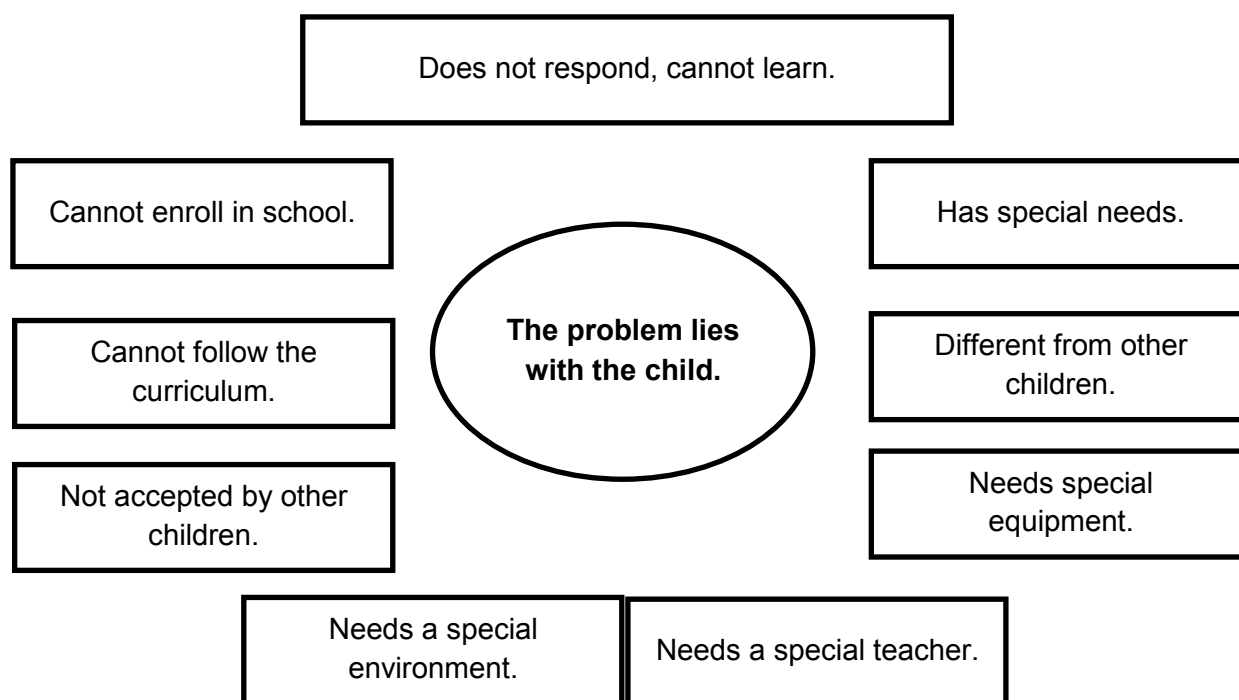
- **Monitoring school resources:** For inclusion programs to succeed, it is essential to conduct surveys of inclusion schools to evaluate their resources, including location, buildings, services, facilities, activities, and teachers, to determine their ability to meet the goals of inclusion.

3- Challenges of Inclusion:

As noted earlier, full inclusion may not be limited to children with disabilities but can also encompass all groups of children who are marginalized or excluded from society or the school system for various reasons, such as religion, gender, nationality, language, or illness. Consequently, there are challenges that may hinder the inclusion of individuals with special needs into the general education system. Based on inclusion experiences, Stubbs discussed two opposing views regarding the challenges that prevent inclusion from achieving its goals.

The First View: This perspective holds that the problem lies with the child with disabilities.

Children with severe disabilities, in particular, have special needs and require specific resources that may not be available in regular schools. These children are inherently different from others, often not accepted by their peers, unable to follow the standard curriculum, and in need of a special environment and specially trained teachers. Additionally, they may not respond effectively to inclusive education.

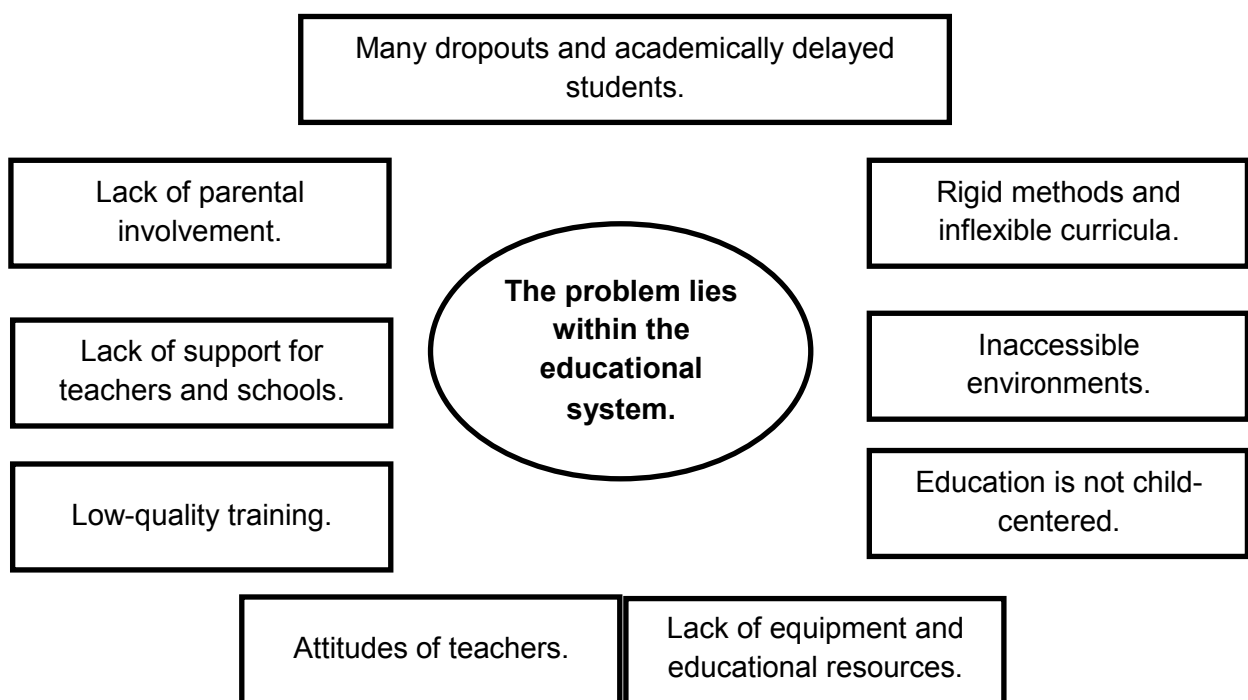


The Model That Views the Problem as Rooted in the Child (Shash, 2016, p. 113).

The Second View:This perspective holds that the problem lies within the educational system.

Among the challenges facing the educational inclusion of individuals with special needs in regular schools are issues related to the educational system itself. These include rigid teaching methods, inflexible curricula that fail to address the needs of all children in the classroom, and school environments that are inaccessible or difficult for some children with special needs to navigate or engage with.

Other issues include education that is not centered on the child and their individual needs, a lack of necessary equipment and educational aids, negative attitudes among teachers, insufficient training, lack of support for teachers and schools, and limited parental involvement. The result is a higher rate of school dropouts and students falling behind academically. (Shash, 2016, p. 114).



The Model That Views the Problem as Rooted in the Educational System

Some researchers have highlighted several challenges facing the inclusion of individuals with special needs in regular schools, including:

- **Weak societal preparation:**The primary obstacle to inclusion lies in beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions toward individuals with special needs and their education. Therefore, the success of inclusion policies in regular schools requires modifying the general attitudes of society toward individuals with special needs and their education. It is essential to foster positive societal attitudes.
- **Limited financial resources:**The prevalence of poverty and illiteracy in many areas negatively impacts the situation of children with disabilities, increasing discrimination against them. Educational systems cannot progress effectively toward comprehensive

inclusion without calculated and secure steps, which may sometimes be neither measured nor risk-free.

- **Inflexible curricula:**Children with disabilities need appropriate education that allows them to develop their abilities. In many cases, children with disabilities are excluded from education, even when they are in the same classroom as typical children. This exclusion results from rigid curricular activities that fail to address their educational needs or from negative attitudes and perceptions among teachers and peers during lessons or while implementing daily curricula.
- **Lack of parental involvement in inclusion programs:**Families play a significant role in the success or failure of inclusion. Parents of children with disabilities must acquire a deep understanding of inclusion, particularly integrating their child into both the family and school. Conversely, parents of children with disabilities must recognize the rights of their children and understand the mutual benefits of inclusion for both disabled and non-disabled children. (Shash, 2016, p. 115).
- **Lack of Supportive Legislation and Policies for Inclusion:** It has become essential to review current laws, regulations, and policies related to the education of individuals with special needs in light of inclusion policies to align them with the Human Rights Convention. This is necessary to:
 - Ensure the educational rights of individuals with special needs, eliminating discrimination or bias against them and enforcing adherence to inclusion standards.
 - Prevent conflicts or overlaps among responsible entities, such as the Ministries of Education, Health, and Social Affairs, and establish full coordination between them.
 - Focus on mandatory regulations to gather accurate statistics and information regarding the number, conditions, and categories of children with disabilities and those not included in schools to ensure the necessary services are provided.
 - Include issues concerning these groups in the priorities and agendas of local leadership.
 - Create advocacy groups from families and local communities to push for laws supporting the inclusion of individuals with special needs in regular schools and society.
 - Develop a financial policy to support inclusion programs while planning to ensure sustainability through local efforts. (Shash, 2016, p. 116).

4- Conditions for Inclusion:

One of the most important conditions for successful inclusion is careful planning that provides suitable opportunities for peer interaction. Inclusion does not simply mean placing children with and without disabilities in the same environment. Steiner (1977) warned against the risks of experimental inclusion based on the principle of trial and observation. Inclusion

without prior planning may lead to problems and difficulties rather than achieving the desired goals. When planning inclusion programs, the following key factors should be considered:

- The ratio of children with special needs to typical children in the classroom should not exceed one or two students per class.
- Developmental level rather than chronological age should be prioritized. Children with special needs should be included with younger typical peers to reduce disparities.
- Carefully planned individualized educational experiences. Good educational programs consider the unique strengths and weaknesses of each child.
- Educators must commit to actively involving parents in the planning and implementation of their children's educational programs.
- The success of inclusion depends on the attitudes of all stakeholders, including children, parents, teachers, and administrators.
- Inclusion requires general classroom teachers to function as part of a multidisciplinary team. The diverse and varied needs of children necessitate collaboration among specialists to ensure successful inclusion. (Al-Khatib& Al-Hadidi, 2008, p. 143).

Third: Forms and Levels of Inclusion

1- Forms of Inclusion: The selection of the appropriate program for a child depends on several factors, including:

1. Comprehensive diagnosis and assessment of the child's condition to determine the type and severity of the disability, the extent of their limitations, their functional performance abilities, and their psychological and social characteristics.
2. Identifying the child's specific educational and learning needs and defining appropriate procedural objectives to meet these needs.
3. Evaluating the available programs and alternatives within the local and nearby area for the child, assessing their effectiveness in addressing the child's needs in terms of curriculum, suitable educational materials, school facilities, and the availability of qualified personnel, including teachers, trainers, and specialists.
4. Selecting the appropriate program to meet the child's needs and achieve the highest possible level of educational, psychological, and social development within the desired objectives.

Classifications of Inclusion Forms:

First: Classification Based on Inclusion DurationBased on the time spent by individuals with special needs alongside their typical peers, two forms of inclusion are prevalent in many special education systems worldwide:

A. Partial Inclusion: This involves organizing special classrooms for some categories of students with special needs within regular school systems. Students spend most of their school time in these special classrooms and are taught by specially trained teachers proficient in various methods and techniques of special education. These classrooms are also equipped with tools and devices not typically available in regular classrooms.

- **Rationale for Partial Inclusion:**

- The deviation of children with special needs requires the provision of specialized educational services.
- Such children need to learn how to adapt to and interact with their typical peers, as they will eventually live in a society made up mostly of typical individuals.
- Typical children need to learn how to adapt to and accept peers with special needs, as they will live in a community with some individuals who have disabilities.

- **Advantages of Partial Inclusion:**

1. Special classrooms allow children with special needs to remain in their communities while maintaining close connections with typical peers.
2. Partial inclusion in attached classrooms considers the unique needs of children with disabilities, while also teaching them how to interact with typical peers.
3. It helps typical children develop positive attitudes toward peers with special needs.
4. Having one or more special classrooms within a regular school is more cost-effective than establishing separate schools for each category of individuals with special needs. (Shash, 2016, p. 78).

- **Objections to Partial Inclusion:**

1. Under this system, children with special needs may have to travel long distances to reach schools with special classrooms suitable for their disabilities.
2. Although the special classroom may be physically integrated into the regular school system, it can often become socially isolated from the school community, highlighting the child's differences and reinforcing their sense of being distinct from others. (Shash, 2016, p. 79).

B. Full Inclusion (Comprehensive Inclusion):

Full inclusion refers to the complete integration of individuals with special needs into regular schools. Students with special needs are placed in regular classrooms alongside their typical peers in the same school. Efforts are made to ensure that both the child and the teacher receive high-level professional support from specialized teachers. In some cases, this approach combines specialized school programs with regular school programs.

- **Characteristics of a Full-Inclusion School:**

1. Enrollment of all students in the neighborhood school.
2. A philosophy of non-rejection.
3. Students with disabilities make up a proportion of the school population that reflects their presence in the general community.
4. One principal is responsible for all programs in the school.
5. Continuous interaction between students with and without disabilities.
6. Placement of students in classrooms that suit their needs.
7. All students benefit from the curriculum of their grade level.
8. Use of individualized teaching methods, cooperative learning, and peer teaching.
9. Provision of supportive services in the natural teaching environment.
10. Sharing experiences and educational materials.
11. Collaboration among school staff.
12. Use of natural support systems.
13. Encouragement for teachers and students to respect individual differences.
14. Rules and guidelines emphasize the importance of acquiring social skills as much as academic skills. (Shash, 2016, p. 70).

- **Factors for the Success of a Full Inclusion System:** Success can be measured through:

1. Interaction between typical students and students with special needs and the extent of observed social integration among students.
2. Providing necessary facilities and tools to ensure the success of inclusion, as well as offering supportive services like speech therapy and physical therapy within the natural school environment whenever possible.
3. Allocating adequate time for special and general education teachers, administrators, parents, and students to plan the curriculum, discuss strategies, and review experiences and educational materials.
4. Avoiding separation of roles between general and special education teachers, ensuring that the skills of all teachers are accessible to all students.
5. Acceptance of the inclusion concept by parents, teachers, and staff, along with training all school personnel to support inclusion effectively.

Second: Classification Based on Activities and Practices In addition to previous classifications, the Warnock Report (1978) identified five forms of inclusion based on activities, practices, and interactions between students with special needs and their typical peers:

- **Spatial Inclusion:**

This refers to creating special classrooms attached to regular schools. In this case, special education institutions and general education schools share the same building but maintain separate curricula, teaching methods, and specialized staff. The administration may be unified. This form of inclusion, often referred to as special education classrooms attached to regular schools, means that students with special needs are educated within the same school building but in separate classrooms or units.

- **Educational Inclusion:**

This involves enrolling students with special needs alongside typical students in the same school under the supervision of the same teaching staff and within the same school program. However, there may be differences in the curricula used. In some cases, the program includes a regular classroom, a special classroom, and a resource room, fitting into the partial inclusion model.

In general, educational inclusion refers to integrating students with special needs with their typical peers in the same classrooms designated for typical students throughout the school day. They either study the same curricula as their typical peers or participate in shared educational programs while receiving special education services. This type of inclusion requires the presence of conditions and factors that ensure its success, including acceptance of students with special needs by their typical peers in regular classrooms and the presence of a special education teacher working alongside the general education teacher to implement measures that promote success. These measures include fostering positive social attitudes, adapting exams, and designing appropriate educational materials. (Shash, 2016, p. 71).

- **Functional Inclusion:** This type of inclusion requires children with disabilities to participate in the same educational programs as typical children for some time, after which they are withdrawn from regular activity rooms to receive individualized or specialized instruction from a trained teacher.

- **Social Inclusion:** This refers to the participation of children with disabilities in general classrooms during various school activities, such as trips, sports, art, music, and other social activities. This is considered the simplest form of inclusion, as the student with special needs does not join their peers in academic classroom learning but is instead included in various non-academic activities such as physical education, art, recess, school clubs, trips, camps, and more. (Shash, 2016, p. 72).

- **Community Inclusion:** This form of inclusion provides opportunities for individuals with special needs to integrate into various community activities and events, enabling them to become active and productive members. It ensures their right to work independently, freedom of movement, and access to recreational and social services available in the community, in addition to participating in economic and professional activities.

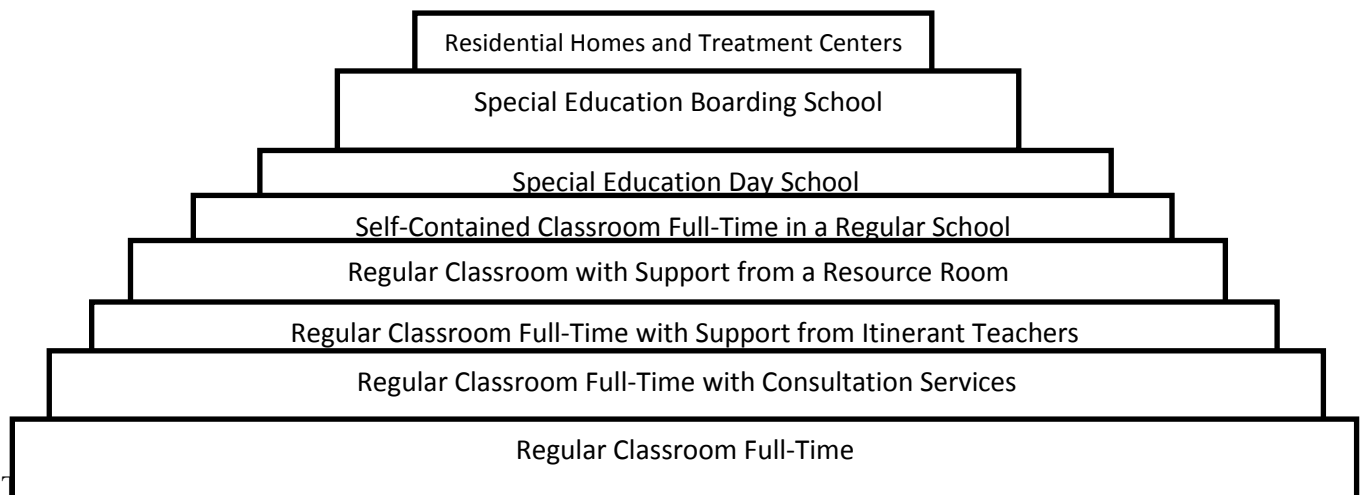
Community inclusion also involves learning the laws and systems of different professions and life beyond the framework of school or the institution they regularly attend. Achieving community inclusion requires extended periods to change societal attitudes toward the

participation and integration of individuals with special needs in all aspects of community life.(Shash, 2016, p. 73).

- **Engaging the external community** through seminars, banners, and educational and cultural institutions, as well as organizing events on disability and creating legitimate channels for community participation in the activities of associations and special education institutions.
- **Organizing research competitions** on individuals with special needs and artistic contests that reflect their needs and integration into society.
- **Arranging visits** for prominent community leaders to disability institutions, special education institutes, and programs.
- **Conducting training courses and programs** for professionals working in the field of caring for individuals with special needs to continuously improve their skills.
- **Inviting individuals interested in disability issues** to participate in the activities, programs, and initiatives of associations and special education institutions.
- **Providing financial and material grants** to families of individuals with special needs, along with other forms of assistance, in cases of necessity.
- **Training families of individuals with special needs** on educational and caregiving methods at home, emphasizing that community practices in the context of inclusion serve as a message of education, awareness, and societal attitude adjustment regarding the social impact of the inclusion process.

- **Levels of Inclusion and Special Education Services:**

Special education programs are organized in levels, as illustrated in the following structure:



2016, p. 74).

Here is a brief overview of these programs and levels:

First: Regular Classroom Program Full-Time: This level of service is the least isolating and restrictive educational environment for a child with special needs. It ensures that the child learns full-time alongside their typical peers while addressing their specific needs according

to their condition, without specialized assistance from consultants or special education teachers.

Second: Regular Classroom Program Full-Time with Consultation Services:Children receive their education in regular classrooms with their peers. The regular classroom teacher is responsible for them, with additional support provided through specialized services by a consultant teacher who visits regular schools.

Third: Regular Classroom Program Full-Time with Support from Itinerant Specialists:Children spend most of their time in regular classrooms and leave only for short periods to receive special services from trained specialists in various fields. These specialists rotate between regular schools with disabled students according to a specific schedule or as needed.

Fourth: Regular Classroom Program with Support from a Resource Room:The child with special needs attends regular classrooms for varying daily or weekly periods based on their needs. They then move, either individually or as part of a group, to a dedicated resource room within the school or community. In this room, they receive specialized academic, skill-based, or guidance support suitable for their disability from a trained teacher. This occurs when the regular classroom teacher cannot provide these services.

Fifth: Education of a Child with Special Needs Full-Time in a Special Classroom within a Regular School:For disabilities that prevent children from studying in regular classrooms, they are placed in special classrooms within regular schools, supervised by a specialized teacher.

Sixth: Education of a Child with Special Needs in a Special Education Day School:Here, the child with special needs receives education and training in a specialized school separate from regular schools. These schools often have equipment and educational and training programs tailored to the type of disability or deviation affecting the children who benefit from their services.

(Shash, 2016, p. 83).

- **Elements of Inclusion:**

1. **Establishing a General Philosophy and an Organized Plan:**The first and perhaps the most essential step in creating an effective inclusion system in schools is to develop a general philosophy for the school based on principles of democracy, equality, belonging, and ensuring quality education for all students.

Sukman identified the following elements for the philosophy that schools should be built upon:

- Assisting communities in defining their goals concerning the needs of all students.
- Providing opportunities for communication between educators and community members to foster understanding about expected goals.

- Defining the level at which educational practices and applications will be evaluated.

2. Availability of Highly Competent Leadership:The school principal is responsible for establishing and defining the school's standards and making decisions related to them. They must address challenges that may arise during the implementation of inclusion, interact with all parties involved in the process, and ensure that the implementation aligns with the school's philosophy.

The principal can contribute to the success of inclusion in the following ways:

- Supporting teachers by providing training and helping them learn new teaching methods.
- Ensuring effective and constructive communication among all students in the school.
- Collaborating with teachers to develop disciplinary approaches for the school that align with classroom management methods and behavioral strategies.
- Assisting the school in maintaining its role as a supportive institution that remains engaged with community concerns.

3. Providing a School Environment That Respects and Embraces Students with Disabilities:The school serves as a platform for training students in attitudes, interests, and skills that they will use throughout their lives. Thus, the school must take responsibility for addressing and improving negative societal conditions.

Steps to Foster Friendships:

- Set classroom goals that encourage cooperation rather than competition.
- Reduce the number of students in the classroom to allow each student ample opportunity to participate and engage in school activities.
- Provide opportunities for students with disabilities to present themselves positively in front of their peers and teachers during the school day.
- Ensure that all classroom facilities and school activities are designed to accommodate all students, including those with disabilities.
- Include topics and exercises in the curriculum that support positive values, respect, and mutual appreciation among students, regardless of their differences.
- Involve students in making decisions related to classroom policies and rules.
- The school should function as a community that cares for all its members, ensuring that students feel valued, safe, connected to the school, and that their needs are prioritized.

4. Providing Support Resources:The diversity in student needs necessitates advancements in support services and methods for delivering them to both students and teachers who lack experience in addressing the special needs of disabled students. Every school must establish a support team consisting of individuals who collaborate to find solutions to problems arising

during the inclusion process. This team exchanges ideas and discusses methods, strategies, and activities related to inclusion.

5. Ensuring the Support Team Fulfills Its Responsibilities: The team must monitor students to identify their achievements. Often, a gap exists between the planned objectives and the actual implementation of the plan.

6. Providing Organized and Ongoing Technical Assistance: The team responsible for developing and implementing inclusion in schools should create a plan to deliver technical support to all school staff. This includes applying new educational methods and conducting periodic evaluations to determine the types and content of required technical support activities.

7. Flexibility: A key dimension of flexibility is the ability of teachers to move away from traditional methods in their professional practices. Teachers in schools that have successfully implemented inclusion do not view themselves as specialists in a single field but rather adopt a broader approach, working across various aspects and contexts.

8. Using Effective Teaching Methods and Evaluations: Among the strategies that facilitate effective learning and achieve desirable outcomes for all students is the theory of multiple intelligences.

- It suggests using diverse teaching methods tailored to each student's type of intelligence and their preferred learning style.

9. Promoting Success and Learning from Challenges: To ensure ongoing innovation:

- Celebrate and reward success, even if it is limited.
- Explore methods and strategies that contribute to achieving success.
- Clearly define objectives in detail.
- Assist all involved in achieving these objectives.
- Continuously seek ways to improve and achieve goals differently and more effectively.

10. Gradual Implementation of Change in Inclusion: Teachers should apply changes incrementally without restricting their flexibility. Gradual implementation is often justified using the theory of change, as educators believe that change should begin with small units and expand over time. Rapid changes may lead to resistance and rejection of new methods, ultimately resulting in the failure of reform efforts. It is also essential to consider individuals' reactions throughout the process.

***Benefits and Drawbacks of Inclusion:**

1. Benefits of Inclusion:

A. For the Child with Disabilities:

- When a child with disabilities participates in inclusive classrooms and experiences acceptance and welcome from others, it boosts their self-confidence, gives them a sense of value in life, helps them accept their disability, and understand their abilities and potential early on. This fosters a sense of belonging to the community they live in.
- The child gains new skills, learns to face life challenges, and benefits from educational opportunities and social models. This promotes more appropriate social development and reduces the stigma of disability.
- Inclusion provides the child with a social, behavioral, and communication role model, reducing excessive dependence on the mother.

B. For Typical Children:

- Inclusion leads to a change in the attitudes of typical children toward children with disabilities.
- It helps typical children learn to accept children with disabilities and feel comfortable interacting with individuals who are different from themselves. (Shash, 2016, p. 58).

C. Benefits of Inclusion for Parents:

Parents feel reassured that their child with disabilities is not isolated from society. They also learn new methods for teaching their child. When parents observe their child's noticeable progress and interaction with typical children, they begin to think about their child more realistically. They realize that many of their child's behaviors are similar to those of other children of the same age. This improves the parents' feelings toward their child and themselves.

D. Academic Benefits of Inclusion:

- Children with disabilities in full-inclusion settings achieve significantly better academic outcomes in areas like writing and understanding expressive and receptive language than they do in segregated special education schools.
- Reports tracking special education students indicate that graduates from special classrooms have lower employment rates compared to those educated in inclusive settings.
- Working with children with disabilities in an inclusive system offers teachers opportunities to enhance their educational and personal experiences, as inclusion allows teachers to fully engage with children with disabilities. (Shash, 2016, p. 59).

E. Social Benefits of Inclusion:

- Inclusion raises awareness within the community about the rights of individuals with disabilities, emphasizing that they are human beings who should be recognized as integral members of society. (Shash, 2016, p. 60).

- Advocates of the philosophy of "a community for all" view it as the most effective approach to combatting negative attitudes and rejecting individuals with disabilities, and in some cases, preventing harmful practices against them.
- Including students with disabilities alongside their typical peers has economic benefits for society, as it ensures that education budgets are used more effectively, ultimately benefiting students significantly.

2. Drawbacks of Inclusion :

- Including individuals with special needs in regular schools and classrooms may negatively affect them by widening the gap between them and their typical peers, especially if academic achievement is the sole measure of inclusion's success.
- Inclusion increases anxiety levels among students with special needs.
- Placing students with special needs alongside their typical peers impacts the implementation of the educational program as a whole.
- Inclusion may lead to the failure of students with special needs in extracurricular activities.
- When typical children and children with disabilities are in the same environment, typical children may imitate the movements of children with disabilities.
- Students with special needs may feel failure and frustration due to their inability to keep up academically with their typical peers.
- Inclusion programs may increase the isolation of some students with special needs within the school community.
- Teaching students with special needs in regular schools deprives them of individual attention, specialized learning, and personalized educational tools available in special schools.
- Isolation may increase for students with special needs if their conditions prevent them from participating in various school activities.
- It is challenging to provide all necessary services in an inclusive environment.
- Developing individualized educational plans for each student with special needs can be difficult for special education teachers.
- Delivering academic content to students with special needs in regular classrooms may be problematic.
- Inclusion may negatively affect parents, as it constantly reminds them of their child's inability to progress compared to typical children.
- The lack of acceptance of the inclusion concept by school administrators and staff poses a challenge. (Shash, 2016, p. 62).

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