INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: ISSUES FOR THE CLASSROOM GROUP

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Nowadays, students with disabilities are being educated with same-age peers under a model of education known as inclusion. Other models of special education assign students with disabilities to segregated classes for primary instruction by teachers with different training. Only limited time, if any, is spent in the regular classroom. However, with inclusion, all academic services needed for students with disabilities are provided in the regular classroom. Services may include special materials or equipment, adapted lessons, or classroom aides.

The inclusion model hopes to bring out favorable academic and social benefits for students with and without disabilities. However, when students who were previously excluded from the classroom suddenly been included, there are implications for the social structure within the class.

In many classrooms, issues of personal and social growth are seen as extraneous to the central task of the classroom—mastering the curriculum. Teachers often deal with conflicts, issues of acceptance and rejection, and class cohesion only when they are forced are asked to do so. In the classrooms within this inclusion model, these issues are expected to rise very quickly.

Furthermore, students with special needs often have triggers that can result in bad and unwanted behaviors. If these triggers are accidentally activated, then the students might set off disruptive actions that can affect other students around him or her. This will cause loss of focus and loss of orderliness within the class.
Fortunately, there are easier means that educators can use to deal with these situations. One of which is planning activities which will enable students to deal with issues of personal and social growth that occur in the classroom group. An example of an effective group work model would be to use peer helpers for a variety of students and also have different peer helpers for different tasks. It is important to recognize and promote the helping skills of the student with a disability.

Additionally, teachers should also have a copy of a report of extensive assessments of all students. This way, they can have a better understanding of the behavioral pattern of students and the triggers that causes them. Knowing this, they can then stray away from these triggers and regulate the class to prevent disruptive behaviors.

An inclusive classroom might have its boons and banes, but, at the end of the day, there are no issues and problems in the academic setting that cannot be resolved.

References:

