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Scope of the Inclusive Learning Environment Instead of the Segregated One for the Disabled Learner Group: An Academic Survey

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ABSTRACT

In Bangladesh Segregated Learning System (SLS) is practiced for years to educate autistic children or children suffering from developmental disorder. SLS totally isolates a learner from the society offering less chance to get adapted with the realities of the world beyond. Inclusive Learning System (ILS) is the method introduced to nurture the autistic children and encourage the disabled learners for a successful transition into the society. The present study shows how through a segregated learning environment students are utilizing the facilities to develop their intellectual development whatever the physical shortages are. Presently the demand of inclusion is found among the disabled students and the teachers who are practicing the SLS for few decades. In the foreign countries Inclusive Education System (IES) is working successfully for educating autistic or disabled children but the challenge is on the hand of the education institution, their tools and also on the teachers and instructors. This study also highlights how Bangladesh has the scope of adapting Inclusive Learning Environment (ILE). Facilities of ILE will take us to a new horizon, where the autistic children or the children with developmental disorder will be no more a burden to the society; rather they will have the scope to prove themselves as an asset for a country.

Keywords: *Segregated Learning System (SLS), Segregated Learning Environment (SLE), Inclusive Learning System (ILS), Inclusive Learning Environment (ILE), Inclusive Education System (IES), Autistic Children, Developmental Disorder Children*

INTRODUCTION

Disability is a universal element for human being, to which no one is immune. In a society persons with disabilities are minor in number and they are often deprived of their rights, education and opportunities. This negligence bars the autistic persons, and sometimes also seen as a curse and a cause of embarrassment to a family. Bangladesh is a developing country of the South Asian region, and from near about 140 million population 3% of the people are by born intellectually disabled. Since 1997 in Bangladesh very few organizations have started promoting special care, support, education, and

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vocational training for the developmental disorder children or autistic children to develop their life-living condition. Autistic persons can be classified into four groups considering their physical condition, i.e., mild, moderate, severe and profound. Generally it has been found that children from mild and moderate conditions have the ability of participating in academic and non-academic activities. In the 20th century the United Nations (UN) has declared equal rights and opportunities for the autistic persons. Considering the declaration, Govt. of Bangladesh adopted a national policy for the Disable People in 1995 (Bangladesh Welfare Act for the Disabled 2001).

To develop their (autistic children) life-living condition, some private and few government institutions are running segregated education program in Bangladesh. These kinds of educational centers impart care for the developmental disorder children and it is different from the regular curriculum. Worldwide, three types of education programs are practiced, i.e., Segregated, Integrated and Inclusive. Among these three types of learning environments, inclusive learning program is meant to provide special care and attention to the individual requirement of each student, and it is commonly practiced with successful results in most of the foreign countries. In Bangladesh few NGOs are operating inclusive education program in the pre-school level. These projects, in a true sense, cannot benefit the autistic children in the long run. Introducing ILE in Bangladesh could offer us access to a new horizon where equal rights of education, opportunity and responsibility are distributed successfully among the disabled and regular students. Through this practice we can change our attitude in considering the rights of the developmental disorder children as a part of social development rather than social welfare.

AUTISTIC CHILDREN OF BANGLADESH

Autism, also known as 'Classical Autism', is the most common condition in a group of developmental disorders. Autistic children or developmental disorder children are minor in number and it has been found that 3% of our total population is by born victim of developmental disorder. These children are often neglected and harassed by the society and even in some cases also by their family members. In the past years, there was no scope for this oppressed part of the population in getting the opportunity to be educated and to lead a acceptable social life. Though education is one of the basic fundamental rights, the autistic children had always been deprived of that. From 1977 few private organizations started to consider the rights of these special care need kids. Bangladesh Government, in the recent past years, has also been very supportive about the need of the autistic children.

It has been found that some 20% of world's poorest people are disabled and 90% of the disabled children in a developing country like Bangladesh is out of school. Mortality rate for disabled children in Bangladesh is 80%, even though in the other developing countries the average is 20%. Disabled people are found in all the various marginalized groups of poor people. (The New Nation, 3 June 2007)

Department of Social Service (DSS) and NGOs are running many special and inclusive education centers for the autistic children in Bangladesh, but they are mainly in the pre-school level and there are many major shortcomings in the existing education system for the disabled children. Early detection and intervention programmes are inadequate: each school has 60-70 seats, but there is no system to identify disabled children nor is there any practice to encourage them to enrol: so many seats are not filled. (Rieser 2009)

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF THE AUTISTIC CHILDREN

Constitution records all the rights of the citizens of a country along with other institutional important documentation. Right of getting basic needs for the citizens is mentioned in the Constitution of Bangladesh, which also includes the rights of the disabled or autistic children of Bangladesh. Programs for the mentally retarded or intellectually disabled have been included considering the world declaration and need for service from 1997. First, in 1993, the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) has set-up a National Coordination Committee (NCC) for the disabled under the chairmanship of the Minister in charge of the Ministry of Social Welfare. The members are drawn from concerned organizations both at the Government and Non-Government level. National Forum of the Organizations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD) coordinates among the organizations in Bangladesh and advocates for legislation and other facilities for the development of the disabled. 204 organizations are involved in this Forum as members of its General Council. The Forum has already achieved some success and advocated strongly in favor of the disabled persons. The Forum has taken initiative to collect, assimilate and disseminate information on disability issues to and from various sectors. As per their action plan, they organize workshop and seminars to promote the activities for the welfare of the persons with disability.

The GOB is aware of the need for appropriate policies, laws and plans for education, training and rehabilitation of the persons with disability (PWDs). Accordingly, various measures have been taken as per the needs of PWDs. Over the decades the GOB has taken a number of steps. Of late, the Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) have demonstrated their keen interest in the cause of education, training and rehabilitation for the needs of the PWDs.

In 1995 the GOB took a very important decision by adopting the National Disable Policy, which acknowledges the constitutional and international obligation of the PWDs. The policy gives the guideline for prevention, identification, education, rehabilitation, research and other facilities and management of national programs for the welfare of the PWDs. But, Implementation of policy guideline is far from the reality. An action plan has already been launched in the light of the policy. Disabled Welfare Act (Protibandhi Kallayan Act 2001) has also been passed in the Parliament. This legislation had been prepared in consultation with the PWDs and NFOWD. To fulfill the need and creation of

opportunities for the PWDs, the GOB is currently considering the amendment of the law for the PWDs drafted and suggested by NFOWD. “Bangladesh Government has formed National Co-ordination Committee for the Disabled, Bangladesh Disability Trust, and Committee for Inclusive Education to promote development of the intellectually disabled along with all disabled. Bangladesh maintains working relationship with the International Organization related to intellectually disabled.” (Mamun 2009)

The Constitution of Bangladesh also ensures family life and integration of people with intellectual disabilities without any discrimination. The disability issue is not only highlighted by the Government but also by NGOs working in the sector of disability through different means of communications. They are doing it to create positive awareness towards the disability issues. A number of studies, reports, posters, flip charts, books, manuals, and films have been developed for effective awareness development program. (Haider 2009)

SCOPES OFFERED BOTH IN BANGLADESH AND IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

In Bangladesh, special or segregated, integrated and inclusive educational methods are being used to educate children with autistic or disabled children. The GOB has established a special and integrated education system and NGOs are implementing special and inclusive education systems. The Department of Social Service (DSS) runs five special schools for blind children; seven for deaf children and one for intellectually disabled children. The DSS also maintains 64 integrated schools for blind children in 64 different districts. NGOs operate many special and inclusive education centers, but they are mainly in the pre-school level for the disabled children. (Rieser 2009)

In the special education system the number of government special and integrated education institutions operated by the Ministry of Social Welfare is inadequate. The non-government special education system is very expensive which is out of the hand of the normal citizens. Insufficient government resources are also allocated in this regard. The teachers are offered low salaries and poor benefits, causing a lack of interest in teaching the children with special needs. Teacher training facilities are also inadequate and there are not enough trained teachers. Teachers have an interest in advancing training to enhance capacity and develop skills, but the authorities (GOB and NGOs) are not found to be interested.

Most such schools are not physically accessible; sign language used in special schools for hearing and speech-impaired children is in English; so they cannot communicate with others in their families and communities. Bengali signing has been developed recently, but it is not yet widely practiced.

There is also lack of relevant support systems like extra sessions and individualised education programs, and of therapeutic and assistive technology. Special education system emphasis on vocational training is insufficiently geared to enable pupils to go on to higher education. (Rieser 2009)

The integrated education system is being operated only by the government and only for blind boys, and the supply of Braquille books and other equipments is inadequate in these integrated schools. Low remuneration and benefits for teachers is also common in this education system. Here also resourceful teachers have no opportunities to develop further skills. By this education system other autistic children are not benefited.

The inclusive education system has only been introduced very recently and is operated by the NGOs in informal education settings and primarily in rural areas. Most of these schools are of pre-primarily level and the teachers are not adequately qualified and trained. Here only marginalised children with mild degrees of disability are enrolled. The classrooms and permises are not accessible and seating arrangements along with the environment are not comfortable for disabled children. The supply of teaching and learning materials and other equipments is insufficient. The classrom environment is not suitable for accomodating different types of disabled children. (Rieser 2009)

Though the educational and also higher educational facility is less in Bangladesh still some 300 disabled persons worked in the past general election as election observers, and the number of participants was the second in the world. In different workshops held for disabled children identify the necessity of giving opportunity to the disable people to attend as international poling observer in the world so that they can explore their knowledge and communicate with other nations. (The New Nation, 3 June 2007)

Throughout the world different types of education systems are practiced for educating the autistic children. Among them special or segregated, integrated and inclusive learning systems are widely practiced. Many research works were also done to understand and learn more about the children with autism. Now children with autism are being included in child care, recreational and educational programs more frequently. Many pre-school and full times education programs are run to facilitate the autistic children adapting different approaches of teaching.

Many workshops are organized to facilitate the autistic children. Very recently a workshop was held in Bangladesh where disabled leaders and persons from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand participated. By these workshops, the disabled people are getting opportunity to share their views and experiences and to develop the regional unity. (The New Nation, 3 June 2007)

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM & ITS EFFECTIVENESS

Inclusive education system (IES) for disabled children is a new concept in the world and this learning is principally concerned with disability and special educational needs of autistic children. In Bangladesh the system is also introduced and few NGO's are working with the system in the pre-school level. The term is used to "describe an educational institution that promotes a significant effort to encourage disabled students for successful transition into society (Wikipedia 2009)." The IES is concerned about the education of all

children in the mainstream schools. Mainstream schools indicate the educational institutions where regular and physically fit students are being instructed. Mainly inclusion is about the child's right to participate and the school's duty to accept. In this system collaboration between regular and special educators benefits a lot. Here students are able to relate each other and give them a better learning environment.

The term inclusive learning also explains the developmental history of the concept and its implementation in different countries. According to the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) 1996 inclusive learning is "the greatest match or fit between the individual learner's requirements and the provision that is made for them" (New Horizon for Learning 2009). And this match must be at three levels between the teacher and the learner, the organization and the learner, and further education as a whole and the learner by providing adequate and sufficient provision.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) which sets out children's rights in respect of freedom from discrimination and in respect of the representation of their wishes and views supports the inclusive learning system. And the UNESCO Salamanca Statement (1994), which calls on all governments to give the highest priority to inclusive education, also rejects segregation or exclusion of learners for whatever the reason is, e.g., ability, gender, language, care status, family income, disability, color, religion or ethnic origin. This mainly puts emphasis on making learning more meaningful and relevant for all, particularly to those learners who are most vulnerable to exclusionary pressures. (Wikipedia 2009)

Inclusive schooling is implemented by Hands On Learning Australia where disengaged students, as well as some students with special needs, are included in the mainstream schooling. The teachers and persons who were working for the setup of inclusive learning environment claimed that this system is an effective one for both teachers and students. This system brings socialization among the students; they can learn communication and interaction skills from each other (students with special needs and normal students). This environment also allows students to relate with each other and it creates a better environment for learning. Positive modeling is important for the students in such classrooms, because a good example towards both special needs and peers without need from a teacher will help the students to get along more. (Wikipedia 2009)

LITERATURE REVIEW AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Many books, criticisms, essays and research works are published on the subject of disabled children and their condition on the society, which are available in electronic media and in different websites. *Disability Bangladesh* is such kind of source which aims to facilitate a paradigm shift from an all-pervading welfare and charity backed by clinical ideology of disability towards a human rights-based approach. They promote the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The website *IdeaBrief* has published articles on inclusive program to produce concise information with rich reference which reveal what inclusive programs can look like and provides some practical tips for getting there. This document defined the inclusive education system vividly and also shows the benefit of inclusive learning system. It is said that children are far more open to diversity than they are given credit for. If an environment is created where everyone is welcome and feels comfortable, and everyone can see that there are tools, strategies, and different ways to do things, they are all more supported to exercise their intellectual faculty. This further suggests that inclusive classrooms are great incubators for all kinds of innovative ideas and approaches, and the introduction of new strategies and tools.

Wikipedia, the free online encyclopedia, has introduced papers titled *Inclusive Learning*, *Integrative Learning* and *Special Education*. From the paper *Inclusive Learning* we come to learn that inclusive learning is principally concerned with disability and special educational needs of children. Inclusion is about the child's right to participate in regular schools and the school's duty to accept it. It is also about the schools' change to improve the educational system for all students. Inclusive schools no longer provide 'regular education' and 'special education'. Instead, it provides an inclusive education resulting students' ability to learn together. Here it is declared that no student is excluded from or discriminated within education on grounds of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability, birth, poverty or other status. Collaboration between general and special educators benefits a lot. Students' being able to relate to each other gives them a better learning environment. Involving peers without need with special needs peers gives the students a positive attitude towards each other. But according to some critics setting-up inclusive education system is a great challenge and they also doubt about the success of the plan. *Integrative Learning* is another educational system which is defined by Jerry Perez de Tagle as "comes in many varieties: connecting skills and knowledge from multiple sources and experiences; applying skills and practices in various settings; utilizing diverse and even contradictory points of view; and, understanding issues and positions contextually." And the last one *Special Education* describes that in this system the students' individual differences and needs are treated individually and separately. Students with emotional and behavioral disorders, physical disabilities, and developmental disabilities are institutionalized through this education system. We can term this system as segregated learning process too. This also discussed the concepts of inclusion, mainstreaming, segregation, exclusion education system.

The article titled *Inclusive Learning* also explains the term along with the development history of the concept in different countries. Here the term is defined according to the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) 1996 as "the greatest match or fit between the individual learner's requirements and the provision that is made for them". And this match must be at three levels between the teacher and the learner, the

organization and the learner, and further education as a whole and the learner by providing adequate and sufficient provision. This also informs that in order to promote inclusive learning a teacher needs to consider the learner, their learning goals and the learning environment.

Another important website *New Horizons for Learning* published an article titled *Inclusive Learning Environments for Students with Special Needs* discusses the inclusive learning system where all students are full members of the school community. In an inclusive school, students with disabilities are provided specially designed instruction in their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). This article also supports that inclusive classroom works effectively if the right preparation and support are taken properly.

Another article titled *Country Report: Bangladesh, the 26th Asia-pacific International Seminar on Education for Individuals with Special Needs* published under the *National Institute of Special Education (NISE)* is an important resource to develop the target hypothesis.

A research paper titled *Situational Analysis and Assessment of Education for Children with Disabilities in Bangladesh, South Asia, East Asia and South Africa* shows the condition of the disabled people's education and their social condition. In Bangladesh, it has been found that on average 35% of peer learners and 13% of teacher's attitude towards disabled learners are unfriendly. This research paper has shown some other helpful points related to this paper's hypothesis. In Bangladesh, the education of children with disabilities is considered a welfare issue rather than a development issue. Impact of segregated learning totally isolated the disabled children from the society. Inclusive education system is not practiced widely; some of the NGOs have inclusive school and they are primarily in rural areas and most of them are at the pre-school level.

Both the articles titled *Country Report: Bangladesh* by Md. Zulfiker Haider and *Country Report: Bangladesh – State of the Persons with Intellectual Disability in Bangladesh* by Jowaherul Islam Mamun introduces an education center for disabled children Social Welfare Intellectual Development (SWID) Bangladesh, which is an educational center for the disabled children and has been considered here as a source of collecting secondary data for the targeted hypothesis.

A research paper titled *Country Profile on Disability, Peoples republic of Bangladesh* published on March 2002 from Japan International Cooperation Agency Planning and Evaluation Department shows the ratio of disabled people's educational and social conditions and also discusses and defines the term 'disability', discusses their right according to the Constitution of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh: Situational Analysis from the book *Implementing Inclusive Education* by Richard Rieser discusses the condition of the segregated or special education, integrated education and inclusive education system in Bangladesh. In this article inclusive learning is again considered as a more effective learning system for the disabled children.

METHOD OF THE STUDY

To develop the hypothesis, existing related articles and books which are found in the websites were considered. The primary task in this regard was to go for the background check of the disabled people's social, economical along with the academic facilities from different statistical records. Past research works related to the target hypothesis by different scholars were also read and understood. After reading the texts cautiously to carryout the research work, a deep analysis of the present condition and a thorough filed work were done with the best possible authentic information collected.

A combination of methodologies was used to collect information and data based on the present condition of the disabled people for the purpose of research, i.e., in-depth interviews, collecting case studies, literature review of available policy documents and web search. A set of questionnaire was used, which was a combination of closed and open-ended questions and this set is used to interview fifteen relevant instructors for the disabled people at SWID Bangladesh. The research used a participatory approach in the whole process.

Survey Technique

The questioner used to do the survey was prepared with two groups of questions – open ended and close ended. During the time of the survey one to one interview was taken and interviewee's personal experience is also recorded as the personal case studies.

Data Collection

Two basic sources are used to collect data by using a set of questioner.

1. Primary Data: collected from fifteen school teachers of SWID Bangladesh
2. Secondary Data: collected from online journals, annual reports and published articles

Data Analysis

After the collection of the data, it was analyzed by Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software. According to the nature of the data, input and also output the results were organized.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

During the time of the survey for this study it has been found that maximum number of the developmental disorder children is suffering of speaking difficulty.

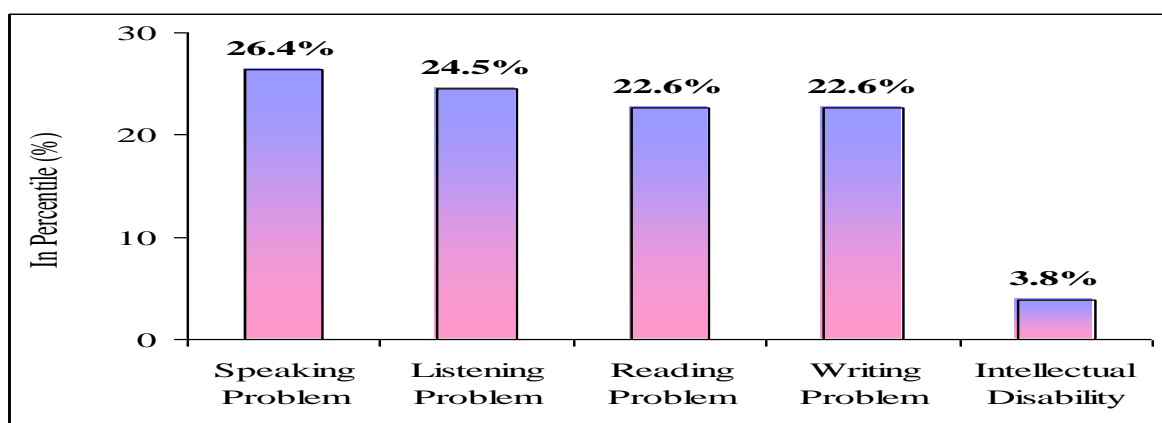


Figure-1: Types of Problems Faced by Disabled Students

Figure-1 shows the ratio of different natures of the problem faced by the autistic children. From the response of the teachers it is found that most of the children are suffering from more than one problems. The figure shows that 26.4% of the pupils have speaking difficulty and 93.3% of them have other problems along with the speaking problem, 24.5% of pupils have listening problem and along with this problem 86.7% of the children are facing other difficulties too. The number of the reading and writing difficulty students are same, 22.6% of the total. Only 3.8% of the students are intellectually disabled and these children are also victims of other problems like speaking and listening. These data show, though these pupils are having shortage in their four basic skills of communication, their intellectual state is comparatively better. A little support can make their life easy and they can also be counted as an asset for the nation.

The above problems are not only a barrier for their education or intellectual development, most of these students are also found introvert at a time. But if a teacher has the potentiality to make students feel secure, students also try to communicate with the instructor from the initial level in the reverse order. Table-1 shows, among the autistic children sometimes 90% of the students are found to be introvert and only 20% of them are expressing what they need. In some cases it has also been found that 50% of the students are expressing their thoughts and needs. On the other hand, the picture of communication rate at the initial level is quite different. Sometimes it has been also found that 100% of the students are trying to communicate with the teachers and only 10% of them are finding difficulty to communicate with the teachers. In some cases it is also found that in the initial level classes only 40% of the students are communicating with the teachers for their educational need.

| | Minimum | Maximum | Median |
|---|---------|---------|--------|
| Rate of Introvert (%) | 20 | 90 | 50 |
| Rate of communication at initial stage (%) | 10 | 100 | 40 |

Table-1: Rate of Introvert of the Disable Student

Opportunity of schooling plays an important role on the gradual development of the disabled children. In the initial stage the disabled children get admission with various kinds of shortcomings. Along with behavioral problem they also have problems on their basic linguistic communicative skills. At a time they have problems of speaking, reading, writing, concentration and also in understanding ability. Table-2 shows, in all most every class it has been found that initially 10% of these students have the ability to speak, read, write, concentrate and understand. After attending the schooling program completely, 70%-100% of miraculous increase of ability is found.

| | Minimum | Maximum | Range | Mean | Median |
|---|----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Increase of Speaking Ability (N=15) | 10 | 80 | 70 | 35.33 | 40 |
| Increase of Reading Ability (N=15) | 10 | 80 | 70 | 34.62 | 30 |
| Increase of Writing Ability (N=15) | 10 | 80 | 70 | 36.15 | 30 |
| Increase of Concentration Ability (N=15) | 20 | 80 | 60 | 43.57 | 35 |
| Increase of Understanding Ability (N=15) | 10.0 | 100.0 | 90.0 | 45.0 | 40.0 |

Table-2: Effectiveness of Schooling on Speaking, Reading, Writing and Concentration Levels of Disable Children

Disabled children always face difficulty in every respect of their life. To make their difficult time comfortable the family of the disabled child and also the society can play an important role. Parents of the disabled children are considered as the first persons to support them fruitfully to overcome the difficult time of their (disabled children) life. Positive feedbacks about them and their work make them feel comfortable and easy. And gifts in return of their work encourage them to do more creative work. In Figure-4, the survey indicator shows that 34.3% of the teachers of a disabled educational institution supports on 'giving them (autistic children) positive feedbacks and gifts' for encouraging them (autistic children) and along with it 80% of the participant teachers also considers about other encouraging options. There are other options too which are considered and suggested by the teachers as a supportive attitude for helping the autistic children. Figure-2 also shows, 25.7% of the teachers who are nurturing the disabled children agreed on giving the autistic children very special attention and care. The attitude of behaving with them (autistic children) carefully and understanding them properly can serve a positive and healthy environment for the disabled children. Other controlled attitude like 'not to ever underscore their skills' and 'hearing them with undivided

attention’ are supported by 14.3% of the teachers, and 11.4% of the teachers are supported the act of ‘encouraging them and give them time’.

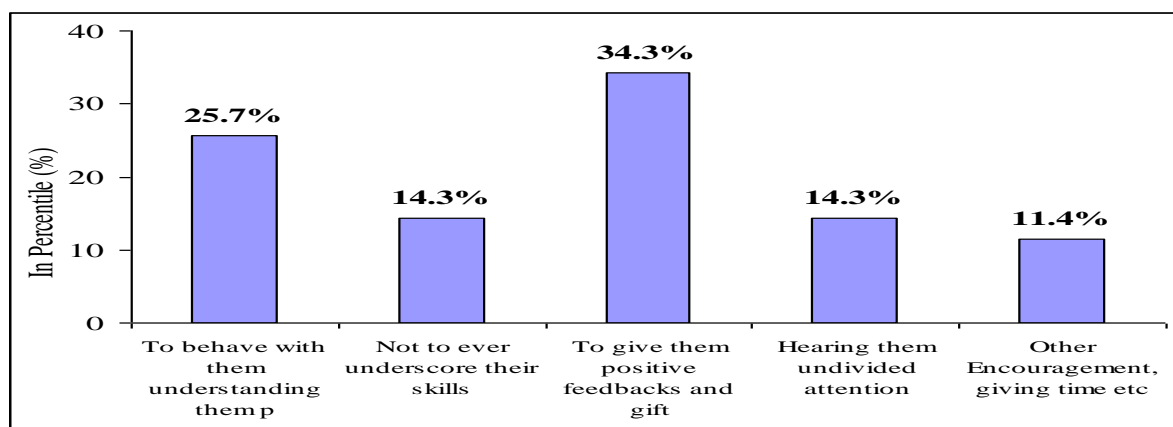


Figure-2: Nature of Behavior of Parents with Disabled Children

In our country, the surrounding society of the disabled persons can work as a very active tool to make their life successful. Presence of a positive role of the surroundings and the society a disabled person can lead a normal life, whereas the adverse environment of the same can destroy someone along with the family. It has been found that by arranging ‘social counseling against those people who are neglecting the disable children’ we can get a better society. Table-3 shows that ‘social counseling against the people who mistreat disable children’ receives the highest response. 38.9% of the surveyed persons gave responses about arranging ‘social counseling against the people mistreating disabled children’ on 93.3 cases. Another two options get second priority; 22.2% of the people gave responses about maintaining ‘positive behavior with both disabled children and their parents’ and in ‘raising voice for social awareness for them’ on 53.3 cases. Other options like ‘comparing with other kid’, ‘awareness building’ and ‘family counseling’ also gets the concentration rate of 2.8%, 11.1% and 2.8% on 6.7, 26.7 and 6.7 cases respectively.

| Category Label | Responses | Cases |
|--|-------------|------------|
| Positive behavior with both disable children and Parents | 22.2% | 53.3 |
| Raise voice for social awareness for the | 22.2% | 53.3 |
| Social counseling against the people | 38.9% | 93.3 |
| Comparing with other kid | 2.8% | 6.7 |
| Awareness building | 11.1% | 26.7 |
| Family Counseling | 2.8% | 6.7 |
| Total (N=36) | 100% | 240 |

Table-3: Behavior of Surroundings and Society

At the time of responding about the behavior of the surroundings and the society, many of the participants went for more than one options. This attitude of the participants indicates that at a time we have to arrange almost all the options for creating a better environment for the autistic children.

Though the disabled children are physically and intellectually unfit, still their learning ability is high. It has been found by the survey that during the schooling period their progress is miraculous. Figure-3 shows that even though the initial stage the rate of learning is very poor, i.e., 6.7%, the overall rate of learning is increased up to 40% during the schooling time. But for some students the rate of learning does not increase much. For maximum number of disabled students, the average rate of learning increases up to 26.7% only.

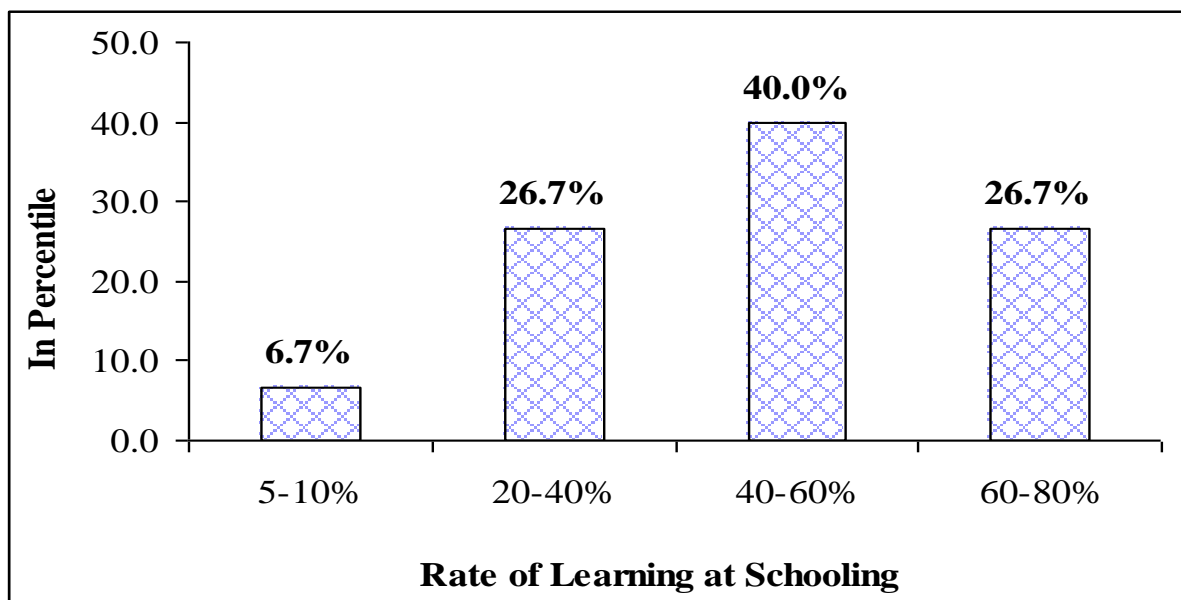


Figure-3: Overall Rate of Learning through Schooling

Mental development of a disabled child is a very important factor. Generally this mental development takes place at the time of schooling. The survey shows that if the disabled children get enough scope, support and opportunity they can be an asset for a country. Figure-4 shows the percentage of such mental development of the disabled students of an educational institution for the autistic children. In Table-2, it has been observed that in the initial level disabled children's understanding ability is 10% and from Figure-4 it has been observed that their gradual understanding ability has increased up to 27.6%. Along with their development of understanding ability, their other faculties also get mature for 53.3% of the learners. Because of schooling, not only their understanding ability has increased but also their eagerness of learning has increased up to 27.6%. The survey shows that during the admission in the educational institution, the disabled children remain very introvert in every respect even in communicating with the teachers and other pupils. But at the time of schooling and after the schooling they start to expose

themselves. 20.7% of them starts playing with others and also 20.7% starts communicating with others. It has also been found that 3.4% of the students found interest in vocational trainings which actually give them a platform to get fit in the normal lifestyle. During the data collection of this paper it has been found that autistic children at a time can improve themselves in different sectors and stages.

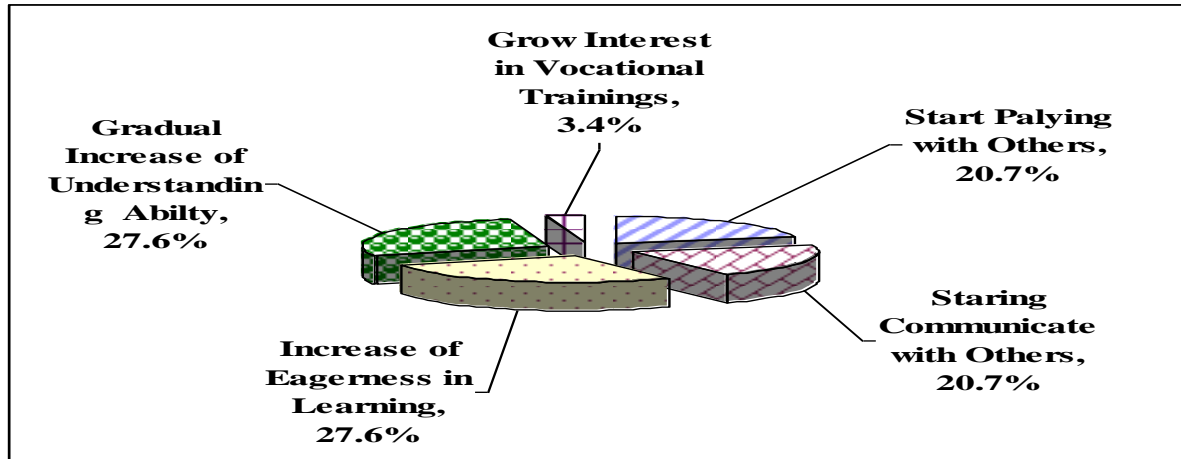


Figure 4: Natures of Gradual Inherent Development

It is obvious that along with the schooling, society plays a vital role for socializing the disables children. Figure-5 shows how social behavior can encourage both the disabled children and their parents to make the autistic children lead a normal life. 38.9% of the teachers, who were the participants for the survey, supports that ‘social counseling against the people who neglect the disable children’ is needed to change the social outlook. 22.2% of the teachers are for the ‘positive behavior with both disabled children and their parents and other 22.2% are found for ‘raising voice for social awareness’. In the survey for social behavior, ‘family counseling’, ‘comparing disabled children with other kids’ and ‘awareness building’ also came as important points. 11.1% of the teachers are in favor of building awareness, where everyone of the society will be conscious about disabled children’s rights. Among rest of the teachers 2.8% supports on arranging ‘family counseling’ and other 2.8% supports comparing disabled children to the other normal kids of the society.

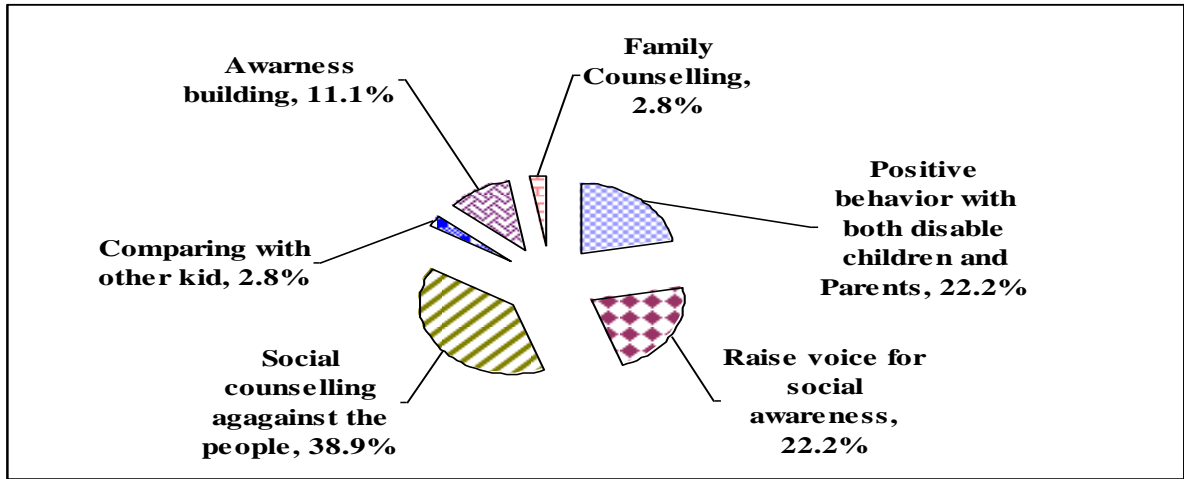


Figure-5: Behavior of Society

From the beginning of the establishment of the disabled children’s education center segregated learning system (SLS) is practiced. In SLS, special needs children are separated from the normal children and their (special ones) educational need is fulfilled according to individual requirements. The teachers who are involved and practicing the segregated education from the beginning are now of the opinion for a different education system. Figure-6 shows, 52.9% of the teachers are in for the inclusive learning system (ILS). Inclusive learning is an equivocator for a disabled child, which gives him or her opportunity to develop to the best. Some teachers are also in support of the combination segregated and integrated education systems. 23.5% of the teachers think that separate educational environment is the best policy to educate and socialize the autistic persons and other 23.5% of the teachers are in support of integrated learning environment, which is practiced in Bangladesh to educate the sight shortage persons only. The survey participants (teachers) who support the segregated and integrated learning systems together also found to support of adapting inclusive learning system in some cases. Total 60% of the teachers are in support of adapting inclusion in education system along with the regular learning system.

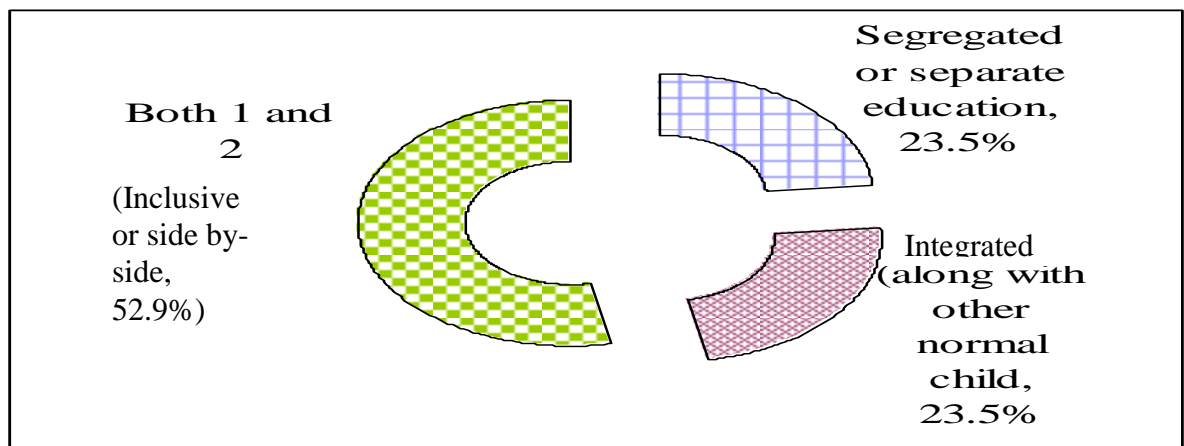


Figure-6: Appropriateness of the Existing Learning Process

The concept of inclusive learning environment (ILE) is familiar in Bangladesh but it is not practiced yet. Some NGOs are practicing ILS in the pre-school level but this practice in true sense not helping the disabled children to get the standard and higher education. Most of the teachers who are practicing SLS think and believe that in Bangladesh we have enough scope to establish inclusive education system (IES), and it will open a new door of success for the autistic children of Bangladesh. Figure-7 shows that among the survey participant teacher 14% said no and 86% of them said yes to the ILS and also supports that Bangladesh has the scope to arrange such education program.

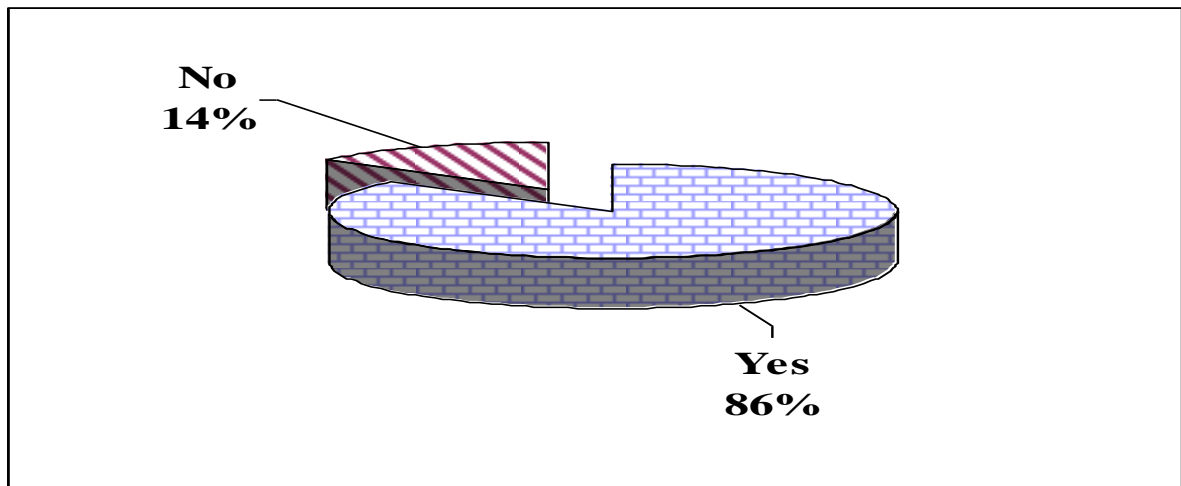


Figure-7: Arrangement for Admission of Disabled Students in the Inclusive Education

Figure-8 shows that the existing capacity for the set-up of ILS is found to be 54.5% in Bangladesh environment. This response is found from the teachers who are practicing SLS for three decades. Some of the teachers also think that it is not possible in Bangladesh and they are minor in number, 36.4%. 9.1% of the teachers are found to be cold about the issue.

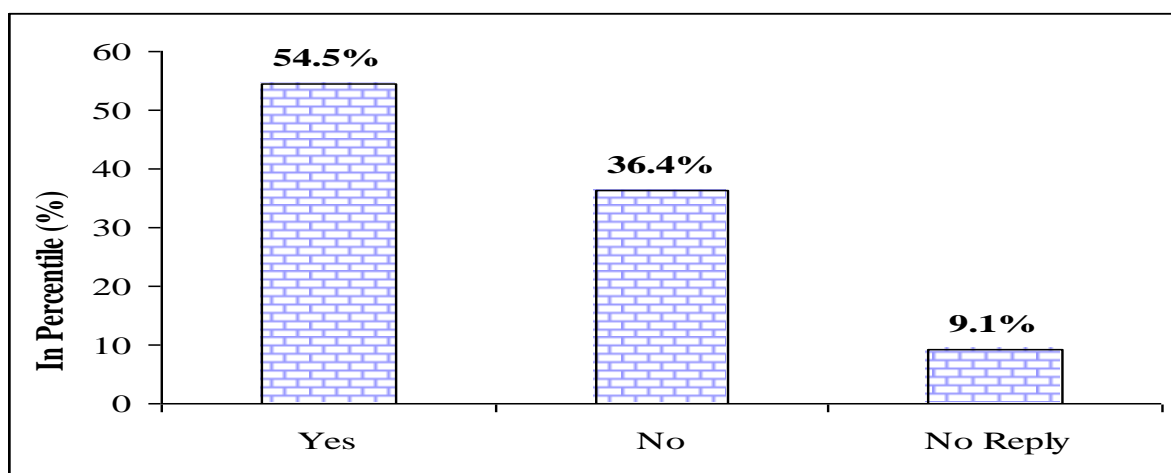


Figure-8: Adequacy of the Existing Capacity

CONCLUSION: RESULTS AND COMMENTS

Bangladesh has the barrier of government rules that the education issue of disabled children is under the Ministry of Social Welfare. The education of children with disabilities is considered a welfare issue rather than a development issue, and this system needs to be changed. As being in the welfare program, disabled children are included to be separated or segregated in the special education program which is far away from the regular schooling system, and consequently the autistic children are kept isolated from the society. From the survey of this study some incredible results have come out:

- Autistic children are able to participate in the academic and non-academic curriculum.
- Their overall learning rate during the schooling time is up to 40%.
- Their gradual understanding rate and eagerness of learning rate is also satisfactory according to their physical condition.
- According to the status of the academic and nonacademic performances of the autistic children, the teachers of these students are very positive about their adapting ability in the society.
- The teachers who are practicing segregated learning system for three decades are now supporting the inclusive learning environment for the students' better performance.
- 52.9% of the teachers are supporting for the establishment of inclusive education system for the autistic children of Bangladesh.
- 86% of the teachers of the autistic children said 'yes' about the arrangement for admission of disabled students in the inclusive education.
- According to these teachers the adequacy of the existing capacity in Bangladesh is 54.5% for setting up inclusive education system.

Inclusive education system can be liaising among disabled children, society and regular schooling system. And, it is found that in many countries inclusive learning system is a successful education program for disabled children's intellectual development. In Bangladesh in the concept of inclusive learning some NGOs are running such program

in pre-school level and this is not practiced widely. Wider use of inclusive learning system in urban and rural areas as a development program can enhance the development of the intellectual faculty of the disabled children of Bangladesh.

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