

INTEGRATED EDUCATION

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by

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“The mediocre teacher tells, the good teacher explains, the superior teacher demonstrates and the great teacher inspires” (Ward, William)

The Sir Shapurji Billimoria Foundation (SSBF) was registered and established in 1998 primarily to promote integrated education. This ideology based on the *Principle of Normalization* was developed in Uppsala, Sweden as far back as the sixties and during the seventies influenced UN policies on education and children’s rights.

“To be like others amongst others” is essentially the goal of this ideology, which needless to say is irrespective of able, disabled or gifted children. The repercussions and implications on education and particularly teacher education are therefore all the more pertinent.

Part I

It may be of some interest to know that the current sentiment “**All children Are Special**” mentioned frequently after the film “*Tare Zameen Par*” has been used by our Foundation since its inception 10 years ago.

Rationale and Justification for IE

- *A Sense of Belonging*
- *Redefining success*
- *Unreachable education gap*
- *Eclectic approach to teaching*
- *Developing appropriate pedagogy and Pace of learning*
- *Integrated course for teachers*

Recent Policies and Trends

- The **first** - 83rd constitutional amendment
- The **second** - The Persons with Disabilities Act (1995)
- The **third** - the SSC Board (in Maharashtra)
- The **fourth** - no “failures” in primary grades
- The **fifth** - the Maharashtra Preschool Act (1997)
- And **sixth** - “Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan”

Track Record

From inception to date the process has been a pre-test stage to explore the depth of the problem before launching part II. We identified critical problems, needs and inadequacies.

- Ideological / Operational Definition
- Short-term courses in Mumbai and outside (1999-2002)
- Exposure visits
- Course Assessments
- Subsequent alterations

Part II - Proposed Institute of Integrated Education

The Problem to be addressed

- Defining success
- Fractured approach in education
- Need for a comprehensive institute
- Absence of humanism in education
- Gifted children
- Lack of relevance in Education
- Inadequate research in teacher preparation

Four major link components - IIE

- A Demonstration School
- A Centre for Teacher Education
- A Unit for Research and Documentation
- A Resource-cum-Pedagogy Centre

Promoting the ideology - getting known

Since its inception the Foundation has partnered several organizations and a variety of schools (general, special remedial)

- Successful employment of students
- Designing a dual mode optional course
- Adoption of course by two affiliated colleges
- Frequent queries and demand for an integrated school
- UNICEF's coverage of our innovative course
- Quarterly newsletter – ***“The RITESTEP”***

Concluding Comments

- Provided an overview of the Foundation's approach to integrated education, in terms of its rationale and justification, from the individual, academic and social perspectives.
- Explored the role of current trends and policies
- Attention drawn to some of the major activities undertaken by the Foundation – for example the innovative 2 year Diploma course.
- Described alterations that have been periodically incorporated based on inputs, experiences and observations during the process of its development
- And finally - establishing a comprehensive Institute of Integrated Education.

To end - we “do not go where the path may lead; (but we) go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”