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Perspectives on Inclusion: Discourses, Politics and Educational Practice

Chapter Outline

Introduction
Defining inclusion: a semantic chameleon
Inclusive education and the question of change
Perspectives on inclusion
Summary
Reflective Exercise

What does inclusion mean to you?
What aspects of educational change are prioritized by inclusion?
What does change mean within your context of practice?
Why is inclusive education a human rights issue?
In what ways is the notion of inclusion reduced to a special education subsystem?
Is it always possible to provide appropriate support in mainstream classrooms or is temporary/part-time removal from the mainstream classroom a better option in some cases?
Why is inclusion a complex and contested term?
What does it mean to have an inclusive education system?
In what ways does the notion of disability intersect with issues of colour, ethnicity and socioeconomic status?
Outline two perspectives on inclusion and discuss their implications for educational practice.
Chapter Outline

Introduction
Inclusive pedagogy: a paradigm shift
Educational differentiation for socially just and non-discriminatory learning
The principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
Inclusive pedagogy and teachers’ professionalism
Summary
Reflective Exercises

Can you identify the dangers lurking behind the recognition of ‘difference’?

In what ways can mainstream schools respond to learner diversity in non-discriminatory ways?

Why does inclusive education necessitate a critical re-consideration of the notion of pedagogy?

Why is a graduated response to disability and special educational needs important?

Are there common educational practices that can be adopted for all students irrespective of their diverse needs?

What is (should be) the role of teachers in current schooling, and how are they empowered to promote inclusive education?
Chapter Outline

Introduction
Theorizing special education: a historical perspective
The politics of special educational needs and disability
Theorizing special education: a new perspective
Postmodern/poststructural theorizing and special education
Postmodern/poststructural theorizing: a multi-paradigm shift and its implications for special education policy and practice
Theoretical pluralism under scrutiny: implications for political action
Summary
Reflective Exercise

What is the role of power in understanding and analyzing the notion of special educational needs?

In what alternative ways can the notion of ‘special educational needs’ be understood and analyzed?

What is the significance of post-functional theorizing in understanding the complexity of special educational needs and disability?
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Understanding Inclusive Education Policymaking

Chapter Outline

Introduction
Inclusive education policy analysis
The politics of inclusive educational policymaking
Summary
Reflective Exercise

How do you understand the metaphor of educational policymaking as a struggle?

How do you understand the complex, contradictory and contested character of inclusive education policymaking?
Defining the Notion of Ideology: The Interplay of Ideas

Chapter Outline

Introduction
Understanding ideology
Language, ideology, power relations and educational policymaking
Ideology and the interplay of action and structure: an exploratory agenda
Ideologies and the politics of inclusive educational policymaking
Summary
Reflective Exercise

In what ways can language become a powerful means for exerting social control?

Why is it important to have an informed awareness of how and what we construct through language?

What conceptions of the ‘ideal student’ emanate from the predominance of the discourse of marketization?

How do you understand the social response to disability? What are the implications for education policy and practice?

On what basis has the social model of disability been criticized?
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Inclusive Policies and Institutional Conditions

Chapter Outline

Introduction
Constitutional and legislative conditions
Administrative-political and bureaucratic conditions
Economic conditions
Deconstructing legislation: deconstructing unequal power relations
Summary
Reflective Exercise

Think of recent legislative developments in your context and discuss the extent to which they promote or hinder aspects of inclusive education.

Think of a number of institutional conditions (within your country/context of practice) that undermine attempts to foster greater inclusive policies and practices.

In what ways do contradictory policies undermine attempts to foster greater inclusive policies and practices?
Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Inclusive Education Policymaking

Chapter Outline
Introduction
Globalization and inclusion: the dialectic of the global and the local
Policy borrowing in inclusive education
Reflective Exercise

How do you understand the historically and culturally grounded character of inclusion?

What aspects of your socio-political context need to be addressed in order to foster greater inclusive policy and practice?

To what extent and under what conditions can Western-centric inclusive education policies and practices become global?

In what ways are aspects of neo-colonialism reflecting the interests of global capitalism, influence the ways in which disability is viewed and experienced in developing countries?
Conclusions

Reflective Exercise

Why is it necessary to maintain continuous and critical debate about inclusion?