



Chapter 6

Navigating Through Inclusiveness in Mathematics Education: Prospects, Priorities, Processes, and Problems

Shashidhar Belbase

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3722-756X>
*College of Education, United Arab Emirates
University, UAE*

Maxwell Preprah Opoku

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7620-0007>
*College of Education, United Arab Emirates
University, UAE*

Wandee Kasemsukpipat

*Faculty of Education, Kasetsart University,
Thailand*

Thapanee Saengsawang

*Faculty of Education, Kasetsart University,
Thailand*

Binod Prasad Pant

*School of Education, Kathmandu University,
Nepal*

Indra Mani Shrestha

*School of Education, Kathmandu University,
Nepal*

Ram Krishna Panthi

*Mahendra Ratna Campus Tahachal, Tribhuvan
University, Nepal*

Nadeia Rashed AlAlawi

*College of Education, United Arab Emirates
University, UAE*

Najla Mohamed Al Owais

*College of Education, United Arab Emirates
University, UAE*

Nabil Kamal Al Farra

*College of Education, United Arab Emirates
University, UAE*

ABSTRACT

There is an ongoing debate on issues of inclusiveness in mathematics education. This chapter highlights the issues of inclusiveness in mathematics education at all levels within four broad dimensions: prospects, priorities, processes, and problems. The prospects of inclusiveness focus on policies and practices that emphasize inclusiveness in mathematics education. The priorities of inclusiveness emphasize the necessity of this dimension from theoretical and practical aspects. The processes of inclusiveness explore the critical areas of concern that educational institutions and practitioners in the classrooms need to implement to ascertain the values and principles of inclusive teaching and learning of mathematics. There are problems with challenges and obstacles to implementing inclusiveness in mathematics teaching and learning. The authors drew upon these four key dimensions to discuss the practical implications of inclusivity in mathematics education.

INTRODUCTION

First, we introduce the concept of inclusiveness in education. Second, we briefly outline inclusive education policies and practices in some countries as examples. Third, we present prospects of inclusive mathematics education. Fourth, we portray some priorities of inclusive mathematics education. Fifth, we demonstrate some processes of inclusiveness in mathematics education. Sixth, we argue on problems associated with inclusiveness in mathematics education. Finally, we discuss some implications of inclusiveness in mathematics education, followed by a conclusion and recommendation.

There is a widespread concern over inadequacies in the education system worldwide and the growing recognition of the critical role of basic and primary education for social progress (Ashman, 2015; United Nations, 2007; World Health Organization, 2011). The World Declaration on Education adopted by the World Conference on Education for All (1990) has proved helpful in designing and carrying out policies and strategies to improve essential education services that may guide toward achieving inclusiveness in mathematics education. Education is described as a social good (Ashman, 2015), and thus, everyone should be benefited from educational opportunities designed to meet their needs both academically and socially in inclusive mathematics education.

Inclusive education has been considered from three perspectives: educational philosophy, pedagogical process, and classroom practices (Clarke & Faragher, 2016). Based on the philosophy, it welcomes all people, as diverse as they are despite their abilities and other backgrounds. Through the process, it may include students academically as well as socially, and it is realized through inclusive classroom practices. When a mathematics class caters to students with different abilities, students are given a better chance to understand the topic, deepen their knowledge and see its' relevance in today's world as well as learn to make connections that are vital in this world. While inclusion is a wide term and can be used to describe or define any number of terms ranging from severe disabilities to different backgrounds, it can also be used to describe students who have specific learning difficulties in mathematics.

Inclusiveness is a philosophy of education based on the notion that everyone has the right to participate in classrooms and society fully, and this concept also applies to mathematics education. Here, the broad notion of inclusive education as creating an opportunity for all children to participate in neighborhood schools guided this discussion (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010). It is believed that the Salamanca

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