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Education of Deaf & Dumb Children for Their Upliftment

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ABSTRACT: Education essentially includes the process of encouraging, strengthening, and guiding the faculties, whether of mind or body, so as to make them fit and ready instruments for the work they have to do; and, where the need exists, it must include, moreover, the awakening for the first time into activity and usefulness of some faculty which, but for the awakening, might remain forever dormant. As regards intellectual development, the deaf individual is the most handicapped of the afflicted class. The term "deaf and dumb", so frequently applied to that class of individuals who neither hear nor speak, is becoming obsolete among the educators of the deaf, as it implies a radical defect in both the auditory and the vocal organism. Persons who are born deaf, or who lose their hearing at a very early age, are unable to speak, although their vocal organs may be unimpaired. They become dumb because, being deprived of hearing, they are unable to imitate the sounds which constitute speech. To correct the error involved in the term dumb, it is customary to speak of human beings who do not hear and speak as deaf-mutes, a term which implies that they are silent, but not necessarily incapable of speaking. Brute animals that are deaf, are deaf and dumb; the little child, before it has learned to speak, is mute, but not dumb. There are found individuals who can hear, but cannot speak. To such may be applied the term dumb, in as much as they are either destitute of the power of speech or are unwilling to speak and are lacking in intelligence. Such children are generally found to be more or less idiotic. On account of the great progress made, especially during the last century, in the education of deaf-mutes, by which a large percentage are taught to speak, the term mute is also omitted when speaking of matters pertaining to that class formerly designated as "deaf and dumb". Institutions for them are named preferably "Schools for the Deaf", and in the literature of the subject they are spoken of simply as the "deaf", e. g. "The Annals of the Deaf", etc. Here it is well to remark, that there is a strong and growing objection among the deaf and their educators to calling their institutions asylums - a term which classifies them with unfortunates needing relief and protection, like the insane. In fact, Webster, under the word "Asylum", classes the deaf and dumb with the insane. Efforts are consequently being made to place such institutions under the control of educational rather than of charity boards.

KEYWORDS: education, deaf, dumb, upliftment, faculties, development, speech, asylum, charity

I. INTRODUCTION

Centers for Deaf and Dumb India connects with deaf & dumb children, organizes retreats & food for them, provides computer education to make them smart for a better-abled future. We also train them in communication techniques, which helps them to safeguard themselves from being exploited or abused. We also provide hearing aids to the needy. Deaf & Dumb children in society are sometimes neglected and considered a burden.¹⁵ Due to a lack of proper infrastructure for training they are not able to show their talents and make a promising career. Because of neglect, they cut off from society and are not able to have meaningful childhood. Lack of communication ability sometimes subjects them to abuse, trafficking, and exploitation. Proper guidance and counseling can help them connect to society. Training them in communication techniques will help them safeguard themselves from being exploited or abused. We also help them with required facilities like food and hearing aids. The education for deaf & dumb may involve, but does not always, individually-planned,¹⁶ systematically-monitored teaching methods, adaptive materials, accessible settings, and other interventions designed to help students achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency and success in the school and community than they would achieve with a typical classroom education. There are different language modalities used in educational setting where students get varied communication methods. A number of countries focus on training teachers to teach deaf & dumb students with a variety of approaches and have organizations to aid such students.¹

Language deprivation is defined as lack of access to language during a child's critical period for language exposure, which begins to taper off precisely around the age of five. Unlike any other population, the vast majority of Deaf & Dumb and hard of hearing children are at risk of having this type of limited exposure to language in early childhood. Research on language deprivation and early childhood interventions to prevent language deprivation are burgeoning. Language Equality & Acquisition for Deaf & Dumb Kids (LEAD-K), for example, is a national campaign that aims to ensure upliftment of such children in society.¹⁴



For deaf & dumb adolescents and adults who have passed the critical period for language acquisition and have experienced language deprivation, the consequences are far-reaching. Delayed age of acquisition of a first language has deleterious effects on all levels of language processing, ranging from syntactic, to lexical, to phonological difficulties, not to mention cognitive delays, mental health difficulties, lower quality of life, higher trauma, and limited health literacy. Additionally, delayed exposure to a fully accessible language (i.e. a natural sign language) in early life not only affects the ability to acquire such a sign language later in life, but "leads to incomplete acquisition of all subsequently learned languages". The impact of language deprivation is severe and must be considered in efforts toward early identification of deaf and hard of hearing children & dumb children as well as intervention.²

In a bilingual-bicultural program, deaf & dumb children learn sign language as a first language, followed by a written or spoken language such as English as a second language. Bilingual-bicultural programs consider spoken or written language and sign language equal languages, helping children develop age-appropriate fluency in both. The bilingual-bicultural philosophy states that since deaf & dumb children learn visually, rather than by ear, education should be conducted in a visual language.¹⁷ To promote students' accuracy and fluency in either language, sign language and spoken language are not used simultaneously, because natural sign languages, possess their own phonological system (with visual phonemes), morphology, and syntactic structure that differs greatly from that of spoken languages. In addition to bilingualism, this philosophy also emphasizes mastery of two cultures, both Deaf culture and dumb culture.³

II. DISCUSSION

Inclusive education makes an effort to make sure that students with disabilities are educated in age-appropriate general education classes in their schools and receive the specialized instructions identified and outlined in their individualized education plan (IEP). There is a range of inclusive teaching strategies that can assist all students to learn but there are some specific strategies that are useful in teaching a group which includes students with hearing impairments. Individuals and organizations that support full inclusion believe that all students regardless of the severity of their disability should be educated in the general education classroom. They feel the social benefits from full inclusion for students with disabilities are sufficient reason to place students in the general education classroom, even if academically they are working substantially below the level of the other students. If students need specialized services, the services come to the student in the general education classroom. On the other hand, parents and professionals who express concerns about full inclusion do so because they feel that a full continuum of placement options need to be available for students because the general education classroom cannot always meet the needs of every student.¹⁸ Some of the reactions to inclusion stem from a lack of information among Like politicians, parents, administrators, and teachers. Some parents feel that if their child is in the same classroom as children with disabilities, their child might act disabled or model inappropriate behaviors. Discussion about "responsible inclusion" is important to dispel some of the inaccuracies and myths about educating all students in one setting. Focusing on awareness issues, providing information about inclusion, and continuing to do research in this area will ultimately result in better understanding the effects of inclusion on all students.⁴

While there are many different resources and definitions that have their own take on the difference between inclusion and mainstream education, I understand these two terms to mean the following: Inclusion: Inclusion is when a student with an IEP is put into a general education classroom with the expectation that he or she will participate in this classroom as much as possible. The goal is to bring the services and modifications necessary for that student into the general education classroom.

The general education teacher and the special education teacher work together to support the student. Full inclusion is also an option, which would mean the student receive all of his/her accommodations and support in the general education classroom. Inclusion classrooms do not require students to leave the classroom for special instruction, rather the support comes to the student. The special education teacher would come to Bill's general education classroom during language arts and assist and instruct him within the context of the lesson. These teachers would adapt the curriculum for Bill and provide direct instruction and support. Therefore, Bill does not lose valuable academic time transitioning between classes and is more likely to become a fully accepted member of the classroom community.⁵

Lip-reading is not easy and requires great concentration. More than half of it is guesswork and so clear speech and contextual clues are very important for understanding. There are lots of things you can make it easier for a lip reader to follow what you are saying. Lip-reading is easier when the subject area is known.¹⁹ Well structured sessions are important for all students, but particularly for those who lipread. Include regular opportunities to re-examine what has been covered. Indicate when the subject is about to change, or a new concept is being introduced, by writing on the board or holding up an appropriate book or article. Allow a little extra time for a deaf student to understand information and respond before progressing to the next stage.¹³



As with most issues, some parents, administrators, teachers, and researchers express concerns about the implementation of inclusion. Some opponents of inclusion feel that general education teachers are not able to deal with great student diversity. Some have the apprehension that the performance of general education students will decline because students with disabilities might consume too much teacher time. Parents of high-achieving students worry that their child will be relied upon too much as peer tutors of lower achieving students. Some teachers be concerned that they will be unable to handle the students with disabilities if emergencies arise in the classroom. Fear is a barrier to inclusion identified by teachers; the fear of responsibility, additional burdens, and the obligation to ensure that all students learn²⁰. Some teachers worry that medical, behavioural, and legal problems are going to cause additional trauma to an already taxed framework of education. Administrators and policy makers need to make sure teachers are not placed in situations where they have no experience, training, or skill to diffuse crisis situations and provide a safe educational environment for all students.⁶

Individuals and organizations that support inclusion believe that all students regardless of the severity of their disability should be educated in the general education classroom. Students with disabilities who are taught within the general education classroom with supports and systematic instructions like visual aids come out as better achievers in the areas of academics, communication, social, and behavioural aspects. Though the Teachers and Parents have certain apprehensions, a larger part of these aids make the world a better to live and survive for the hearing impaired students. The Governments and general education teachers can create a wonderful atmosphere by sensitising the situation and little efforts, as a result of which the hearing impaired can boost their confidence. Though the above said methods and aids are of great help still they do have some shortcomings and risks involved in them.⁷

III. RESULTS

According to Lou Ann Walker, "the first real efforts to educate deaf people began around 1550 when Pedro Ponce de León, a monk from Spain, taught deaf and dumb children in a monastery in San Salvador". Seventy years later, Juan Pablo Bonet, a follower of Ponce de León, published the first book on the education of people who are deaf and dumb. In it he explained that he used a one-handed manual alphabet to build language. In 1700 Johann Ammons, a Swiss doctor, devised a method to teach speech and lipreading (now more accurately referred to as speechreading) to people who are deaf and dumb.²¹ In the mid-1700s, schools for deaf and dumb children were established in Scotland, Germany, and France. Teaching methods, according to Walker, focused, for the most part, on a combination of oralism—teaching students speech and speechreading—and manualism—teaching students a manual alphabet. Schools for the deaf and dumb did not reach the United States until 1817, when Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, a divinity student, and Laurent Clerc, a deaf and dumb student of the National Institute of France, opened the American School for the Deaf and dumb (originally named the Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons) in Hartford, Connecticut. Many teachers trained at the American School, which focused on American Sign Language.⁸

The controversy surrounding how to teach children with hearing impairment, sometimes referred to as the oralism-manualism debate, began centuries ago and continues into the twenty-first century. Opponents of oralism contend that denying children sign language is tantamount to denying them a language to communicate. However, children who can learn language orally are better prepared for a hearing world.²² Most educational programs at the turn of the twenty-first century involve a total communication approach—a blend of oral and manual techniques; however, some members of the deaf community contend that it is inadequate, and they prefer a bicultural-bilingual approach, whereby students learn about the history of deaf and dumb culture after learning American Sign Language and English. A controversial piece of this approach is the focus on American Sign Language—a true language that has evolved over generations but one that does not follow the same word order as spoken English. Proponents of American Sign Language contend that it is natural, fluent, and efficient, whereas signing English systems, which correspond with spoken English, are cumbersome and awkward. To date, however, few public schools use American Sign Language.¹²

Regardless of teaching method, students with hearing impairment and dumb experience difficulties acquiring the language of the hearing society. Educators pay very close attention to the age of onset of the hearing impairment and dumb and the degree of hearing loss because each is closely associated with the severity of language delay. The earlier the hearing loss occurs and the more severe the hearing loss, the more severe the language delay. For many years, professionals believed that deficiencies in language among individuals with hearing impairment were related to deficiencies in intellectual ability; this is not the case. Unfortunately, results of research indicate that students with hearing impairment and dumb are behind their hearing peers in terms of academic achievement.¹¹ Reading is the academic area most affected, wherein students with hearing impairment and dumb experience only one-third the reading growth of their hearing peers. They also lag behind their peers in mathematics. According to 1999 figures from



the National Center for Health Statistics, "approximately 1.3 percent of all school-age students, ages six to twenty-one, who received special education services during the 1996–1997 school year were served under the disability category of hearing impairment and dumb ". It is important to note, however, that estimates of the number of children with hearing impairment and dumb can differ markedly depending, for example, on definitions used, populations under investigation, and accuracy of testing.⁹

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Students with hearing impairment and dumb receive services in a variety of settings, from the general education classroom to residential schools. Parents and many professionals have not embraced the current controversial trend toward policies of inclusion (i.e., placing students with disabilities in general education classrooms for most or all of the school day).²³ They caution that the general education classrooms are not necessarily the most appropriate placement for students with hearing impairment and dumb. However, some students with hearing impairment and dumb experience academic and social success in general education settings. This indicates that the preservation of the continuum of placements, whereby placement decisions can be made on individual bases, is in the best interest of students with hearing impairment and dumb.¹⁰

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