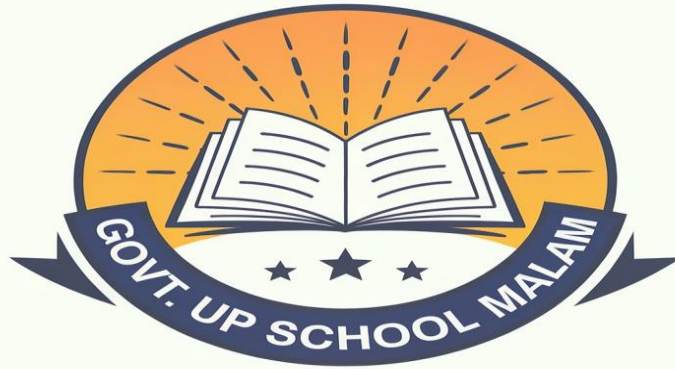


Inclusivity in Schools: A Case Study on ASD Students at G.U.P.S, Malam, Kottayam



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Abstract

The case study titled 'Inclusivity in Schools: A Study on ASD students at G.U.P.S Malam, Kottayam' tries to open up the various issues associated with teaching learning process among ASD students in a classroom scenario. The study also tries to address the diverse strategies implemented in the classroom communication by the teachers to enhance the easy learning process of ASD students, the challenges and problems faced by the teachers in handling ASD kids in a real-life classroom environment and the need of awareness among the parents, society and the government. The study comes under the topic "Leadership for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion".

Key Words: Inclusive, Strategies, ASD, Children

Introduction

Malam is a small village located in the Kottayam district of Kerala, India. The Malam Government Upper Primary School, situated in the Manarcadu Panchayat under the Pampady subdistrict, serves as an educational institution for local children from pre-primary to seventh standard. The school has an enrollment of approximately 100 students. A significant number of students at the school come from socially and economically deprived backgrounds. This socioeconomic context has contributed to challenges such as a lack of awareness about the importance of education among the community, leading to poor academic performance, behavioral issues, and various lifestyle challenges among the students. These factors underline the need for focused interventions to support and uplift the educational standards and overall well-being of the children in this community. As per the new education policy and curriculum, which assures the inclusion of CWSN children in schools along with other students. This incorporation corroborates the prospect of social mingling of CWSN students, which amplify their comprehensive enlargement.

As the new academic year started, the school accommodates around 100 students, in which 13 students are CWSN (From preprimary to class 7). Out of this 6 of them are ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) with variation in magnitude. In addition to this, the students in this school are from distressed backgrounds faced a lot of challenges in their academics, behaviour, character development and personality. The school realizes the need of an upliftment of CWSN students in their overall development by introducing and inculcating various teaching techniques

and strategies in the classrooms. The teachers who handled the sessions faced numerous challenges while engaging them in classrooms. In such a scenario, a study on inclusivity in our school, becomes a necessity. The current case study done among the 6 ASD students in our school in a duration of three months.

Activities

G.U.P.S, Malam perceives the exigency and holdup required for the students for their wellbeing, and incorporated various activities. To address the challenges faced by the students, the school authorities and the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) initiated a program called “**Darppan**” (Which is a continuation “**Dyuthi**” a similar programme held at Malam Government Upper Primary School in 2024) meaning "mirror." The programme is designed to uplift the students' academic performance, improve their behavior, and address lifestyle issues by fostering a holistic development approach. To ensure the smooth functioning and effectiveness of ‘Darppan’, the school authorities sought support from Department of Life Long Learning & Extension, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam and Grace Care Geriatric and Counselling Centre, an NGO based in Vadavathoor, Kottayam district. This programme helped in bridging the gap between classroom education and real-life applications, equipping students with practical insights and skills to prepare them for their professional lives. Through Darppan, the students recognize their potential, thereby enhancing their personal growth and creating a stronger foundation for their future endeavors.

‘Darppan’ programme at Malam Government Upper Primary School was specifically designed to support students from class 1 to 7, with a target group of 50 students. The initiative began with a thorough groundwork phase conducted in late June and early July 2025. This included detailed case studies to understand the students challenges and needs comprehensively. Following this, the problems identified through the case studies were analyzed in a School Resource Group (SRG) meeting, where school authorities, the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), and stakeholders decided to implement “Darppan” as a solution. The programme was officially inaugurated on 23 August 2025, marking the beginning of a concerted effort to uplift these students.

With support from “Grace Care Geriatric and Counselling Centre” and MG University Life Long Learning and Extension Centre, the programme brought together 22 expert counselors

from across Kerala. These counselors played a pivotal role in engaging directly with the families of the targeted students. Both students and their parents were given the opportunity to interact with these experts, addressing their concerns and finding meaningful relief from their worries. The initiative not only provided immediate support but also laid the groundwork for long-term improvement in the students' academic and personal lives. Through a well-structured approach that combined awareness sessions, hands-on activities, expert counseling, and community engagement, 'Darppan' has effectively addressed the academic, emotional, and behavioral challenges faced by the students.

G.U.P.S, MALAM
in association with
DEPARTMENT OF LIFE LONG LEARNING & EXTENSION
MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY, KOTTAYAM

Presents
DARPPAN 2025
(A ONE - DAY CAREER GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING PROGRAMME)
23 AUGUST 2025 10.00 AM ONWARDS
(Individual counselling is available)

For more details
Contact : 6282633670

All are welcome

FECILITATORS

 MAMITHA MOL V COUNSELLOR	 PRABINKUMAR C B DEPUTY MANAGER (INFOPARK , KOCHI)	 ANOOP S NLP TRAINER	 CHANDINI K NAIR	 MARY JOSEPH, RTD.TEACHER	 JAYAKUMARI T. T DIRECTOR JAYA'S ACADEMY	 KHALID C M SECRETARY, THANAL PAI & PALLIATIVE CARE, CERVATTOOR
 NEJIYA P. S	 LENIMOL K P RTD LIVES STOCK INSPECTOR ANIMAL HUSBANDRY DEPARTMENT	 MINI JOSEPH RTD. TEACHER	 DEEPU ASHOKAN YOGA TRAINER	 RETNAMANI. P RTD TEACHER	 JESSY JACOB RTD. CO-OP SOCIETY SECRETARY	 PRASEEDA K R MA, MED RTD. HIGHER SECONDARY TEACHER
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					 MAYA. K. P ADMIN HEAD IN BOLDWIN'S FOUNDATION	



Objectives/Goals

- To address the requirement of awareness regarding the increased number of ASD children
- To know /identify the peculiarities, features of ASD children
- To develop various strategies and techniques to uplift the ASD children
- To address the issues/ challenges faced by the teachers to handle the ASD children in the class room
- To create an awareness among the public, society, and the government for the need of such study
- To validate the active participation and understanding among the parents regarding ASD.

Questions

- What is the requirement study on inclusivity in schools?
- What are the peculiarities of ASD students?
- What are the strategies and the teaching techniques implemented by the teachers to enhance /uplift the graders of ASD children
- What are the challenges faced by the teachers to handle ASD along with other students during the teaching learning process on a regular basis?

- What all awareness can be propagated to the public, society, and the government regarding ASD?
- How to validate the active participation of parents regarding ASD

Need of the Study

The public sector schools are welcoming the inclusivity with ample expectation and apprehension. This step was undoubtedly an innovative platform for CWSN students which come up with adequate extent for social mingling. This welcomes the inflow of CWSN students into the schools. In the current academic year, Malam Government Upper Primary school has admitted 13 CWSN students in which 6 are facing a condition ASD. In a live classroom running with a structured curriculum and teaching manual give over many challenges to incorporate the ASD students in learning process. Their behavioural issues (spitting on others, biting or scratching teachers and other kids), attacking nature, fear of sounds, running out of the class, urination or defecation in the classroom and mood changes create practical challenges in learning process. In such a scenario, the participation and the overall development of ASD children, the challenges faced by the teachers and the new techniques and strategies implemented by the teachers to overcome the learning difficulty, the awareness given to the parents to understand the need of incorporating these students in learning process and to enhance the children to be self-sufficient in their needs is a required study.

Methodology

The study tries to observe the ASD students in the live classroom scenario and experiences various behavioural issues and the challenges faced by the teachers to handle the class. In addition to this, the experiences and the information provided by their parents contribute to the study. The following table deals with the past three months (June, July, August) observation by the teacher.

Tabulation-Issues Observed and Experienced in the classroom-June

Sl No	Student	Behavioural Issue	Scholastic achievement	Challenges faced by the teacher
1	Student 1	Spitting, biting, running from the classroom, throwing texts, lying on the floor, attacking others, defecation	Nil	Beating, Spitting Scratching Disobedience Discipline issue in the classroom, Time management, Difficulty in the dissemination of specific LOS to the students and other students in the classroom, Making loud noise in the class room
2	Student 2	Fear, laziness, always needs to go to toilet	Nil	Fearful to the classroom environment, and loud crying
3	Student 3	Laziness, beating teacher (if ask him to write) hyperactive, Fear of sounds Making loud noise	Nil	Beating the teacher if ask to colour or ask to do some activity, Making loud crying in the classroom
4	Student 4	Running out of the class, hyper active, beating (if ask to write) Tearing papers, throwing things		Beating the teacher if ask to colour or ask to do some activity, Making loud crying in the classroom

		Making loud noise		
5	Student 5	Self-harming, crying, making loud noise, loud crying, harming others.	Nil	Harming teachers if tries to console, loud noise and crying
6	Student 6	Making loud noise, throwing things, running out of the class	Nil	Throwing things to teacher, crying loudly in the class room.

Strategies Implemented on the basis of observation on June and the Result- August

Strategies Implemented By the teacher	Result
Less attention to screaming	One or two times screaming in the classroom
Lound commands to the whole class	Aware of the commands and trying to follow appropriate classroom manners
Implementation of strictness in the class	Shows Stubbornness, but intensity, reduced a lot by the end of the month
Implementing more songs related to classroom activities, physical movements, outdoor activities in the classrooms	Started to listen to the songs, enjoys physical movements and outdoor activities.
Comprehend the routine, and less concern and care to obstinacy	Screamed, shows disobedience to get inside the classroom after the outdoor activity
Find out the best buddy and do the activities in pairs (like reading, writing on the board)	Happy with the buddy to do the activities

Awareness given to the parents for the need of timely therapy	Timely therapy had improved the behavioural issues
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Strategies Implemented on the basis of observation on June and the Result- August

Strategies Implemented By the teacher	Result
Less attention to screaming	The frequency level of screaming reduced
Loud commands to the whole class	Silence on loud commands for a short span of time
Implementation of strictness in the class	Shows Stubbornness, but intensity, reduced towards the end of the month
Implementing more songs related to classroom activities, physical movements, outdoor activities in the classrooms	Started to listen to the songs, enjoys physical movements and outdoor activities. Trying to follow the routine along with other peers(Social interaction works)
Comprehend the routine, and less concern and care to obstinacy	Adapt the routine slowly even if the screaming and stubbornness is there. The peers are very much helpful to calm down them
Find out the best buddy and do the activities in pairs (like reading , writing on the board)	Happy with the buddy to do the activities, Trying to imitate what the peer is doing.
Awareness given to the parents for the need of timely therapy	Timely therapy had improved the behavioural issues.

Skills and sharp sense organs active in the selected students

Sl no	Student	Active sense organ	Skill/talent
1	Student 1	Auditory, vision,touch	Singing, colouring
2	Student 2	Audiary,touch	One time listening will help him to write
3	Student 3	Auditory, vision	Music
4	Student 4	Auditory	Drawing
5	Student 5	Auditory	Singing
6	Student 6	Auditory	Drawing

Analysis

The above tables show the gradual changes happened in ASD students in the class rooms and the various challenges faced by the teachers along with other students. According to the teachers, the challenges were very rigid and bitter in the beginning of the academic year. They felt very difficult to maintain the classroom discipline and reaching to the specific LO's to each one. The behavioral issues shown by the ASD students in the classroom crates issue of time management and getting the attention of other students. The teachers in this phase tries to tackle this issue by put forward various techniques and strategies to make them calm in the class.

The information provided by the parents of these students informs that, these ASD students always have a comfort zone and they got violent when this comfort zone breaks. Since they have very sharp observation capacity, they will measure each person, their behaviour and their way interaction. Being soft to them wont work for the smooth functioning of the class, in contrast the strictness or loud voice or commands can create a superiority over them.

Since they are attention seekers and have laziness on doing their own things, giving less attention to those screaming or loud noise will make them to understand that, their stubbornness won't succeed infront of teachers. Also, the stick that a teacher simply holds in the hand or making a noise with the stick will also create obedience. Similarly, making a habit with their peer group has a lot of impact. Finding out the right peer for each one ASD student is an experiment done by the teachers in the classroom. The recurring replacement of each student will help the

teacher to find out which person can influence them. Making such bond in the class can create multiple changes. ASD students will try to imitate what their peer is doing. It helps to understand them, the interval time, what all things to be done, after that they have some time to play, then to drink water and next bell is for entering the classroom. Likewise in classroom activities also, the participation can be incorporated by making them to read words or sentences along with their favourite buddies. Along with this, this technique helps the teacher to identify which sense organ is very sharp for them and what are the talents or skills of these ASD students.

Giving an awareness to the parents regarding the requirement of therapy for the betterment of ASD students was another major obstacle that the teachers faced during the initial stage. The societal pressure of parents and the emotional issues regarding ASD are the biggest challenges for the teachers to understand the parents on the need of therapy for the ASD students. The strategies and techniques discovered result in accordance with the therapy.

Conclusion

Autism is a condition, which can lead to learning disability or lifelong dependency. Understanding the condition and finding a solution for the overall wellbeing and development of the ASD students is a must require study. Most of the ASD students are coming to the government schools mainly for social mingling which is a basic lack of Autism (that is social exclusion- sitting in idle and not interact with others). On the other hand, the teachers of the government schools are not trained for handling the kids, incorporating the students in the learning process. The challenges and obstacles that the teachers are facing not recognized anywhere.

Malam government Upper Primary School not only has ASD students, but also students with other disability. The parents of these students are from various socio political and economic background. The therapy and other services required a lot of money investment and requires patience. This won't be practically possible for a parent from a very poor financial background. For them, going for a daily wage job and filling the hunger is the priority. In such a scenario if the government schools can provide such facility in schools, it would be a great relief all parents.

The service of a special educator (2 or 3 according to the number of students in a school), an occupational therapist and a counselor on a fulltime basis are very much required in schools now a days. If such a facility is available in schools, then the teaching learning process will be very easy which can assure the overall developments of ASD students and can make them self-sufficient. The three months strategies and techniques could find out a result, if the aforementioned suggestions can implement in schools, then the result will one step ahead.

Suggestions solving the ASD inclusion in schools

- Service of special educator (2 or 3 according to the number of students), occupational therapist, and a counselor in schools on a daily basis, then only the real protentional and skills of these students can be identified and can develop
- A systematic and structured timely basis training for the teachers who are handling the children
- Giving an awareness to the parents through Panchayath and Kudumbhasree

Limitation of ASD inclusion

- Lack of Training resources
- Lack of time to internalize the students to acquire the specific Los
- Limitation of the parents to assess the ASD children to identify the early detection
- Exam assessment and evaluation
- Due to the lack of resources, the real talented ASD children were not coming out.

Post study result -some pictures

