

Include All Not Few: Towards An Inclusive Curriculum

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Defining Inclusive Curriculum

Education is a basic human right and the foundation for a more just society (Ainscow, 2005). The aim of education is to give a transformational experience that enables each learner to attain academic and social standing based on his or her potential. Learning gains are forthcoming only when education is brought to the level of students and through a process of scaffolding, the knowledge margins are broadened and increased. This is termed as an inclusive approach towards the attainment of educational gains. Effective inclusive education transpires mainly through wholehearted acceptance of student differences and diversity, which may comprise physical, cognitive, academic, social, and emotional variations.

An inclusive approach towards curriculum design is therefore preferred as an all-encompassing approach that takes into its fold all levels of learners. Hector-Alexander (2019) opines that an inclusive curriculum design acknowledges that students have multiple identities that are shaped by their previous experiences and that a diverse range of personal circumstances influence how they learn. Inclusive education is championed as a means to remove barriers, improve outcomes and remove discrimination. Hockings defines inclusive curriculum design as “involv[ing] the design, planning and evaluation of programmes, courses and modules not only in terms of their learning outcomes, content, pedagogy and assessment but also in ways in which they engage and include the needs, interests and aspirations of all students” (Hockings, 2010, p. 15)

Grace and Gravestock (2009) point out that, “inclusive curriculum ... refers to the process of developing, designing and refining programmes of study to minimize the barriers that students may face in accessing the curriculum.” (p. 1). The barriers that learners face during the course of their education may have diverse ranges. There may be cultural, social and linguistic differences that may necessitate an inclusive approach. Hector-Alexander (2019) states that an inclusive curriculum design acknowledges that students have multiple identities that are shaped by their previous experiences and that a diverse range of personal circumstances influence how they learn. Chen, Mashadi, Ang, and Harkrider (1999) too argue that learning resources for learners should be consistent with their values, beliefs, and styles of learning. This not only ensures an equitable access but makes learning more meaningful, profound and exciting.

Curriculum Development Principles

Morgan & Houghton (2011) state that inclusive curriculum design is beneficial for students, staff and the institution because it places the student at the heart of the design process. This can involve recognizing students' multiple identities, avoiding compartmentalizing solutions based on specific 'need' and adopting a holistic approach to meeting students' entitlements. Kerr and baker (2013) further emphasize that while designing key principles for inclusive curriculum there are a few elements that must be considered. For example, all inherent requirements for the course need to be clearly articulated and available to students prior to enrolment. Also, it is vital to regularly evaluate the accessibility and inclusiveness of courses and modify accordingly. Further, all learning materials and learning technologies used in the course enrolment, delivery, and assessment should be accessible by students using assistive technologies. In terms of the provision of course materials to students studying in online, distance or blended modes this means that the learning management system itself and all materials placed in the learning management system should be accessible to assistive technologies. The assessments in inclusive curriculum should be flexible to accommodate all learners including time lines, assessment tasks, and course requirements. Finally, the teaching staff should adopt a flexible and inclusive attitude with regard to making alternative arrangements for learners with special needs. (p.78-82). Morgan & Houghton (2011) further outline that the principles of an inclusive curriculum design should be based on anticipatory, flexible, collaborative, transparent and equitable mechanisms that factor in all needs of learners. Thomas and May (2010) advocate that stocktaking of the following must be done if the intention is to teach an inclusive curriculum:

- Educational Level/type of entry qualifications; skills; ability; knowledge; educational experience; life and work experience; learning approaches.
 - Dispositional Identity; self-esteem; confidence; motivation; aspirations; expectations; preferences; attitudes; assumptions; beliefs; emotional intelligence; maturity; learning styles perspectives; interests; self-awareness; gender; sexuality.
 - Circumstantial Age; disability; paid/voluntary employment; caring responsibilities; geographical location; access to IT and transport services; flexibility; time available; entitlements; financial background and means; marital status.
 - Cultural Language; values; cultural capital; religion and belief; country of origin/residence; ethnicity/race; social background.
- Figure 1: Four-pronged typology from student diversity

The above principles aid in building rich profiles of learners which in turn help to formulate a curriculum based on principles of equity and social justice. Every institution therefore should be alert enough to recognize and celebrate student diversity, make learning and educational resources accessible to all kinds of learners, practice diversity in teaching and learning including assessment, promote flexible and multi modal learning environments, create community of equitable practices, and practice reflection to inform decision making.

The Attention Markers in Inclusive Curriculum

While developing an inclusive curriculum there are a few areas that must become its fundamental mainstays. The following section outlines the possible areas for inclusion:

Students with Special Needs

There are an estimated 240 million children with disabilities worldwide.¹ Usually children with special needs are overlooked during educational policymaking which in turn limits their access to socio-economic participation. Such children are most likely to drop out of school. Inclusive education is one of the most effective ways to make education accessible to children with special needs and provide them the opportunity to continue their education and develop the desired skills they need to flourish in society. Morgan & Houghton (2011) state that an inclusive curriculum design approach is one that takes into account students' educational, cultural and social background and experience as well as the presence of any physical or sensory impairment and their mental well-being. They reiterate that an inclusive curriculum design approach is one that takes into account students' educational, cultural, and social background and experience as well as the presence of any physical or sensory impairment, and their mental well-being. Alquraini and Gut (2012) are of the view that unless otherwise instructed, learners with disabilities should be placed with peers with no disability for fruitful learning gains for the former. The main principle is to make such learners acceptable and welcome rather than marginalized and unwanted. Tafa and Manolitsis (2003) opine that those learners attending inclusive programs develop increased respect, awareness, and acceptance of their peers who have special needs, develop less prejudices, and learn to be more helpful and supportive toward them. This in turn enables learners with special needs to develop confidence and reaffirm faith in their own cognitive abilities. Dupuis, Barclay, Holmes, Platt, Shaha, and Lewis (2006) reaffirm that students with disabilities have higher achievement and improved skills through inclusive education, and their peers without challenges benefit, too. Parekh and Brown (2019) state that children with disabilities and special needs in inclusive settings are less likely to experience limited academic opportunities and be negatively affected in their future academic opportunities, compared to those in self-contained special education classrooms. A meta-analytic study conducted by Oh-Young and Filler (2015) compared the outcomes of students with disabilities between placement settings and found that students in more integrated settings outperformed those in more segregated settings, both in the academic and social domains. Moreover, Paul, Di Rezze, Rosenbaum, Cahill, Jiang, Kim, and Campbell (2022) cite a study in which children and youth with disabilities and special needs, when provided opportunities, demonstrated profound personal understandings of their strengths and needs, their conditions and how these impacted their lives. In addition, the study indicated a need for strong leadership at the school level to support implementation of inclusive education, the necessity of professional development for teachers and collaboration with other professionals and a need for flexibility in curriculum and instruction, for which educators require training and experience. An inclusive curriculum also encourages learners without disability to develop positive and caring attitudes towards peers with disabilities. There is a strong possibility of the former becoming peer coaches and developing caring and nurturing attitudes. During the process, they improve

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/education/inclusive-education>

their own competencies in selected subject areas through peer coaching. Such a curriculum not only addresses the academic needs of learners but also makes concrete efforts to prepare mindful and concerning youth who are cognizant and conscious of the differentiated realities of their peers and learn to respect their varied identities. An inclusive curriculum thus fulfils the equity gaps in education and makes a concerted effort to address the academic needs of all.

Social and Cultural Inclusion

McLoughlin and Oliver (2000) note that one of the limitations in current instructional design models is that they do not fully contextualize the learning experience, and are themselves the product of particular cultures. Fitz and Nikolaidis (2020) are of the view that standardized (not to be mistaken for standards-based curriculum materials) and widely disseminated curriculum materials, although sometimes promoted as democratizing access to learning, may undermine equity. Such curricula favour ‘*one size fits all*’ philosophy which may prove unproductive for learners from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds.

Higbee, Katz and Schultz (2010) opine that, “being part of a diverse educational community can enhance growth and development in important skills like leadership, critical thinking, and cross-cultural communication.” (p.1). Alozie, Lundh, Yang and Parker (2021) pronounce the same and state that the voices of diverse students and the educators working with them are often missing from standardized curricula. Also, missing are connections to students’ diverse sociocultural and ethnic backgrounds and their communities and the flexibility to adapt instructional materials to these diverse contexts. Developing accessible curricula therefore is a fundamental equal opportunity and human rights issue, and it is our challenge to address this. (Kerr & Baker, 2013)

Considering that there is more intercultural plurality in the world, it is therefore essential that educational curricula attends equitably to the social and cultural realities of learners. In 2014, U.S. public schools hit a minority majority milestone with Latino, African-American, and Asian students having surpassed the number of white students. In 2044, the U.S. Census predicts that over half of the nation’s population will be people of color.² Cohn (2016) reports that in 2015, for the first time in U.S. history, over half of all babies born were Culturally and Linguistically Diverse. Cultural diversity therefore is unmistakably on the rise. There is a need to practice a culturally inclusive curriculum which reflects the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of every society. A culturally diverse curriculum is when students learn in a supportive environment free from prejudice and discrimination³. A responsive curriculum based on the socio-cultural needs of learners may include: acknowledgment of the presence of individuals and/or groups that do not have social power, prestige, or institutionalized privilege; development of an understanding of their marginalization, active work towards creating equitable and inclusive experiences and opportunities for them and giving due diligence to the socio-linguistic identities of learners.

² <https://drexel.edu/soe/resources/student-teaching/advice/importance-of-cultural-diversity-in-classroom/>

³ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/culture-and-diversity/cultural-inclusion#Culturally1>

The guiding principle for the practice of a socio-cultural rich curriculum is a thorough needs assessment of the learners and their context. Abodey and Ansah (2017) opine that a needs assessment provides the information to determine outcomes (educational objectives) based on a factual foundation and learners' needs. Nugraha, Suwandi, Nurkamto, and Saddhono (2018) consider needs assessment as one of the main investigative tools used by institutions for the identification of actual needs, gaps, and hidden parts of the system and other activities. The needs assessment therefore outlines the various identity markers with which learners come to classrooms and help in formulating efficient governing policies, selection of syllabi, teaching practices, assessment methods and learning environments that are purposeful, active, and meaningful for every learner.

In designing a socio-cultural sensitive curriculum attention can be given to the following areas:

Mother Tongue Based Instruction

One of the approaches to enculturate learners and immerse them in an environment that they are familiar with is through mother tongue-based education, especially in the early years. The said approach emphasizes the use of learners' home languages as the medium of instruction in the early years of schooling, alongside the introduction of regional or national familiar languages. This approach has been recognized for its potential to enhance social justice and equity in education. Nishanthi (2020) states that cognitive development as well as intellectual improvement is relatively faster in those who are fluent in their mother tongue. Pflespsen (2011) cites a study in which an evaluation of mother tongue instruction in northwest Cameroon reveals that first grade children taught in their mother tongue, Kom, perform significantly better across a range of subjects, including English and maths, than those taught only in English. Instruction in the most familiar language is seen to improve learning outcomes as mother tongue based instruction provides a familiar backdrop and rich context which eases the learning process. A curriculum is considered inclusive when it factors in the linguistic heritage that learners bring in classrooms. If commencement of formal education begins in the mother tongue, it reaps in far more cognitive rewards than education given in an unfamiliar language. Avineri, Graham, Johnson, Riner and Rosa (2018) claim that obstructing linguistically minoritized groups from participating in civic and community practices in their home languages limit their access to broader social institutions, diminishes their cultural and linguistic identity, prevents them from having equal opportunities and privileges;... thereby constraining their learning opportunities. An inclusive curriculum based on multilingual education, especially in the early years, provides a level playing to learners who possess varied socio-linguistic identities.

The Case of Tharparkar, Sindh-Pakistan

The case of Pakistan differs considerably when it comes to language of instruction. Pakistan is a diversely networked country with a rich linguistic and cultural heritage. It is home to 69 indigenous languages, some of them are on way to extinction though, and is imbued with a rich and ethnically diverse cultural landscapes.⁴ However, the language of instruction has remained a controversy since

⁴ <https://www.ethnologue.com/country/PK/>

independence in 1947 from the British Raj. The imperialistic past of the country has continued to strengthen the significance of English as a language of status, power and upward social mobility. Since independence, the position of English as an official language has stayed. Urdu, though a national language, has failed to compete with English as an equalizer or a chief identity marker. Regional languages too have failed to gain traction and have not been considerably given attention in the formal curriculum both in the private and public sectors of education. The matter however has been seriously taken up by The Citizen Foundation (TCF), which is one the biggest Non-Governmental Organization in the country operating with 1833 schools across Pakistan with 280,000 registered students⁵. In an effort to raise educational quality standards and learning outcomes TCF has intervened and introduced a contextually rich, Mother Tongue Based-Multilingual Language Education (MTB-MLE) in district Tharparkar of Sindh province in 2020 after a thorough needs assessment and research into benefits of mother tongue based instructional curriculum.⁶ Tharparkar is a district located in the province of Sindh in Pakistan. It is a linguistically diverse region with over 13 languages and dialects being spoken (Ethnologue, 2020). Sindhi is the provincial language for the region and there are several sub-regional languages used on a daily basis, including Dhatki, Marwari, Koli, Oadki, and Parkari. The mother-tongue based multilingual program, functional in 9 TCF schools, entails a curriculum which is rich in bilingual teaching content, context rich thematic stories, inclusive school practices, and informed pedagogical exercises. A cursory analysis of the program has found learners to be more motivated and happy in schools. The teachers have reported better cognitive outcomes, less behavioral issues and improved connectivity with schools. The model, likely to be scaled up, is a firm example of inclusive educational practices based on the language endowments of learners.

Differentiated Curriculum

Differentiated curriculum is one that is individualized to meet the diverse needs of all of the students in one class. (Abodey and Ansah, 2017). It is a way of teaching that adjusts instruction to meet the learning requirements of all students. In a typically differentiated instruction class a teacher improvises the teaching keeping in mind the various cognitive levels that learners are at. It practices the notion of no learner left being behind. Tomlinson (1999) advocates four classroom elements that can fall in the differentiated curriculum category based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile. The first one is the content—what the student needs to learn or how the student will get access to the information; the second one is the process—activities in which the student engages in order to make sense of or master the content; the third category outlines the products: culminating projects that ask the student to rehearse, apply, and extend what he or she has learned in a unit; and the fourth one is the learning environment—the way the classroom works and feels. To exemplify differentiated instruction in a classroom, learners can be grouped according to the cognitive levels and lessons can be designed at various levels of understanding. These efforts can help all learners to improve and master the content. Further, the practice of differentiated instruction can be applied in the assessment domain as well. While some learners take a test, others can demonstrate their

⁵ <https://www.tcf.org.pk/>

⁶ https://view.publitas.com/the-citizens-foundation/mtb-mle-research-report/page/1?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=mtbml&utm_content=mtb-mle-report-download

understating of a concept through project work, report or any other activity. Thus by offering various assessment modes, all learners can engage with the content at their own level of understanding. For example, a reading text based on a story can be used for differentiated instruction in the following manner:

- Learners with low language abilities can be asked to identify difficult words and look for their meanings
- Learners with average comprehension skills are asked to create a story-web.
- Students with advanced comprehension skills are asked to re-tell a story from the point of view of the main character.

A few other examples that be useful to practice a differentiated curriculum are:

- **Creating flexible learning spaces.** Creating flexible learning spaces would mean creating an enabling environment where learners can choose the type of work involvement. For example, some students may benefit from self-directed, independent work while others may need to work in larger groups or require teacher and peer support.
- **Making materials available in a variety of formats.** Materials can be made broad based and wide ranging. Moreover, they can be made available to learners in different layouts. For example, they can be sent to learners in the form of online links, online and printable worksheets, audiobooks and traditional books, you tube links and more. Technology can thus become a strong tool to practice differentiated instruction. Dickenson and Gronseth (2020) are of the view that, “Technology may act as a direct tool substitute, augment the learning experience by providing functional improvements, modify the task design within the learning experience significantly, or redefine the learning experience through the creation of new tasks” (p. 1011)
- **Setting goals.** Setting goals can greatly help learners to stay focused and motivated. While learners work at their pace, goal setting shows them path on which to tread on in an organized and systematic manner. The task enables them to stay meaningfully connected and engaged with learning with desired outcomes in mind.

Differentiated curriculum thus puts the learner at an advantage of progressing at a personalized pace, removing the constraints posed by some standardized curricula. Bursztyn (2007) states that differentiated instruction supports the inclusion of all students, as teachers consider differences in student ability and learning styles to be attributes of diversity rather than identified characteristics used to sort and segregate students. The phenomenon of differentiated curriculum may well be equated with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) which emphasizes that barriers to learning are often caused by inflexible curriculum, teaching materials and methods, rather than by an inherent problem located in an individual student. It focuses on eliminating barriers to learning by considering the diverse needs of students in the design and planning stages of curriculum rather than addressing the barriers later on through individual accommodation (Rose, Meyer & Hitchcock, 2006). UDL strives to create engaged learners who are interested and feel personally connected to the relevance and value of the learning at hand. These students persist in the face of challenges and use resources such as collaboration, coping skills, and self-reflective thinking.⁷ The focus of all such interventions is thus to present a framework that

⁷ <https://www.goodwin.edu/enews/how-to-use-universal-design-for-learning-in-the-classroom/>

gives an equitable and level playing field to all learners and affords them the opportunity to intellectually progress at a pace that matches with their abilities

Contextually Rich Teaching Content

While designing and selecting teaching content, due consideration must be given to the socio-cultural contexts of the learners. Inclusivity demands that the teaching content is relatable and gives an authentic learning experience. Hector-Alexander (2019) states that students who are engaged in learning do not exist as a homogenous group. They come into the learning environment with experiences reflective of their social location and culture. Since culture, language and immediate environment bear strong influence on learning, texts and learning materials should reflect the same in order to meet the needs of culturally diverse learners. Kelly, Caires-Hurley, Kganetso, Moses and Baca (2021) also claim that characters, settings, and authors should be diverse as well as reflective of students' community.

An example of a context based learning content can be derived from mother tongue based-multilingual program in practice at Tharparkar, Sindh-Pakistan. It entails a curriculum that carries contextually and linguistically appropriate learning content. The early grade mother tongue based-multilingual instructional program has prepared story books which are bilingual. The stories are developed in learners' mother tongue (Sindhi or Dhatki) and Urdu which is the language to be acquired. The mother tongue provides a familiar ground to learners and aids comprehension. Conceptual understanding becomes better and the concept is then easily transferred to the new language.

Putting learning in context can make the learning experience more engaging and internally motivating for the student. This in turn can connect the learning experience more closely to life outside the classroom, thus making it relevant and memorable and reducing difficulty when applying new concepts to unfamiliar situations. Moreover, Hector-Alexander (2019) also advise that learners should have access to varied resources to ensure multiple perspectives. This can be achieved by moving away from instructivist approaches where all information is prescribed by the teacher to constructive and connectivist approaches where learners actively add to learning resources, suggest additional materials of interest, and discuss alternatives. This can truly ensure an inclusive curriculum where the context and cultural identities all learners are valued and treasured.

Importance of Learning Styles

Learners have various preferences for ways of thinking and approaches to learning. They have preferences for certain methods of learning and find such methods effective. For example, active learners like physical activity in their learning. Reflective people prefer introspection. Achieving an inclusive design involves curriculum planning that: ... forge[s] ... strong links between educational intentions, course content, teaching and learning methods, and the assessment of student learning while taking full account of student characteristics. (Uniability, 2008, cited by Craig and Zinkiewicz, 2010: 11). One of the strong proponents of inclusive education and learning styles is Howard Gardner, an American Psychologist and a professor at Harvard University. He states clearly that the educational programme should be made as specific as possible to each individual (Gardner, 1993). Gardner's

multiple intelligences theory rejects linearity in curriculum design and implies that learners are intelligent in different dimensions and their smartness in a particular field of study suggests a particular learning style and learning preference. The intelligences proposed by Gardner include linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence, naturalistic intelligence, spatial intelligence, and the personal intelligences (interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence). Gardner suggests that teaching and learning styles should match and new topics should be approached in at least five different ways so that all learners can access the information. (Gardner, 1991). Mcleod (2013) is of the view that educators should ensure that activities are designed and carried out in ways that offer each learner the chance to engage in the manner that suits them best. Among the various factors that influence learning styles social environment, educational experiences and basic cognitive structure of the individual are fundamental. The theory of learning preferences and styles draws a lot of influence from Kolb's (1984) learning theory. Kolb opines that learners naturally prefer a certain single different learning style. Moreover, there are various factors that influence a person's preferred style including social environment, educational experiences, or the basic cognitive structure of the individual. An inclusive curriculum must give regard to the learning preferences in order to make learning reachable and of a greater consequence.

Integration of Social and Emotional Skills in Curriculum

An inclusive curriculum factors in social emotional learning (SEL) and supports its systematic development through integrating the said skills in the curriculum. There are five core competencies within the SEL framework: self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making⁸ that can safely be integrated in the curriculum for effective learning outcomes. Social emotional skill development therefore when made part of the curriculum makes acceptance of diversity easy, builds intercultural communication and collaboration easy and promotes a healthy and conducive learning environment where all learners are valued. SEL skills improve educational equity and create a positive inclusive school environment. Kart and Kart (2021) in a study finds that learners in inclusive settings have more of an inclination to play with learners with disabilities and have fewer prejudices towards them. Such initiatives prepare learners for life and sow the seeds for more equitable societies. Moreover, [Smogorzewska, Szumski and Grygiel \(2020\)](#) opine that including SEL principles in the curriculum result in a greater understanding of diversity, tolerance, acceptance of others and the use of prosocial behaviors in inclusive classrooms which in turn promote Theory of Mind (ToM). ToM is an important social – cognitive skill that involves the ability to think about mental states, both of self and others and lead to more altruistic human development. Sokal, and Katz (2017) opine that Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is aimed at developing these skills and is generally defined to involve processes by which individuals learn to understand and moderate their own feelings, understand the feelings of others, communicate, resolve conflicts effectively, respect others, and develop healthy relationships.

⁸ <https://www.globalcitizenshipfoundation.org/article/social-emotional-learning-for-all-a-call-for-inclusion#:~:text=Social%20emotional%20learning%20supports%20inclusion,%2C%20and%20responsible%20decision%20making.>

One of the ways to merge SEL in the curriculum is by creating interactive learning spaces, especially when they are mediated by dialogue. Such interventions seem to permit collective thinking and learning, enhance academic achievement, social skills, and social cohesion, and are especially beneficial for vulnerable groups of students ([Fernández-Villardón](#), Alvarez, Ugalde, and Tellado, 2020)

Roldán, Marauri, Aubert and Flecha (2021) have conducted a study titled, “Interactive learning environments for the inclusion of students with and without disabilities: Improving learning, development and relationships”. This research was a qualitative study of schools that promoted and applied interactive learning environments, especially interactive groups (IGs) and dialogic literary gatherings (DLGs) for students with and without special needs. The results showed that students without SEN benefitted from participating in interactive learning activities with peers with SEN in different ways: (1) they learnt to respect others, accepted differences, and acknowledged different abilities, thereby creating opportunities for new friendships to develop; (2) they learnt about abilities related to helping others participate and learn, to be patient and to gain the satisfaction in helping others learn and behave better; and (3) they benefitted from the cognitive effort required to explain themselves and from the contributions of peers with SEN from which they could learn. Dar (2016) in a study on the integration of cognitive-affective curriculum concluded that cognitive-affective lessons led to more enlivened classrooms. “The classrooms manifested more group and pair work activities, teacher student discussions, role plays, presentations and other collaborative work. The physical environment turned from teacher-centered to learner centered.”. (p.2400). An SEL curriculum thus ensures inclusivity and works on the humanistic side of learner personality for effective fusion in the institutional setting as well as in society later on.

Conclusion

Morgan and Houghton (2011) state that an, “inclusive curriculum design is beneficial for students, staff and the institution because it places the student at the heart of the design process.” (p.11). This is the same constructivist approach that has been the mainstay of various educational theories with knowledge as an active construction rather than a passive absorption. Elliott, Kratochwill, Cook and Travers (2000) explain constructivism as, “an approach to learning that holds that people actively construct or make their own knowledge and that reality is determined by the experiences of the learner.” (p. 256). The same thought process becomes the backdrop of inclusive education that maintains that learners play a fundamental role in the development of cognitive structures in their schemas and the curriculum design process must draw knowledge from the rich contexts from where learners come. A thorough needs assessment that studies the cognitive and physical embodiments, the socio-cultural and linguistic legacies, and learning styles should form the basis of an inclusive curriculum design. Needs assessment will lead to a fair understanding of the natural endowments of learners and a curriculum can be framed accordingly. An inclusive curriculum design can have the following diagrammatic flow:

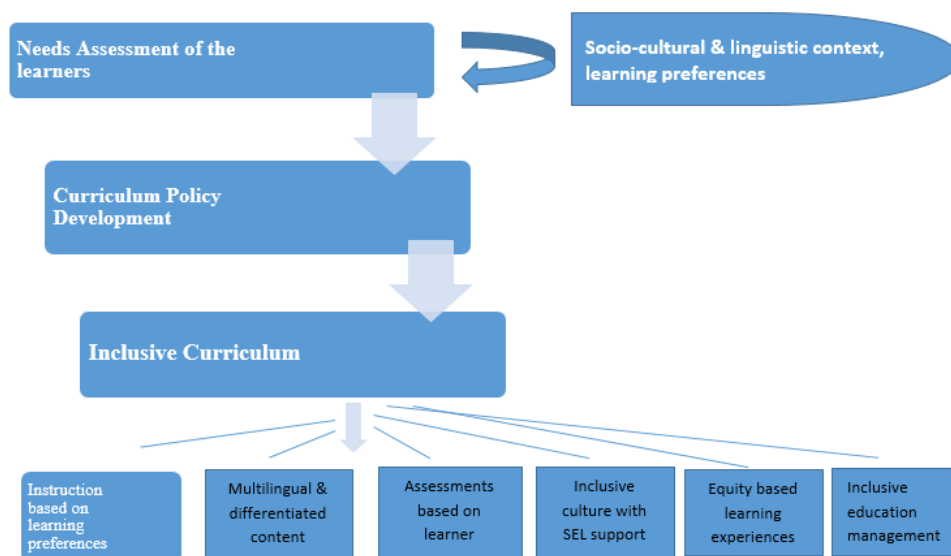


Figure 1. *Inclusive Curriculum Diagram*

A curriculum that reaches out to all through acts of differentiation gives an enriching and all-encompassing educational experience that ensures an equitable and evenhanded cognitive growth and development. Kyriacou (1997) opine that differentiating instruction is said to be the essential ingredient necessary for inclusion. Olibie (2013) also emphasises on the need for teachers to use differentiated curriculum, multiple learning styles and engage in transformational teaching. Inclusion therefore democratizes the concept of education as against set standardized procedures and opens the avenue for equitable access to all kinds of learners. It reinforces the concept that education is a basic human right and efforts must be made for its provision to all forms of learners for equitable adjustment in society.

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Scientific Ethics Declaration

The author declares that the scientific ethical and legal responsibility of paper titled “**Include all not few: Towards an inclusive curriculum**” belongs to the author.