



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

## STUMBLING BLOCKS IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN INDIA

**Dr. ANURADHA SHARMA**

PROJECT FELLOW,

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION (PMMMNMTT-MHRD)

DAYALBAGH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE, AGRA (INDIA)

**Dr. RUPALI SRIVASTAVA**

ASSISTANT REGIONAL DIRECTOR,

INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY (IGNOU)

REGIONAL CENTRE JODHPUR (INDIA)

**ABSTRACT :** Education is a powerful instrument of social change and often initiates upward movement in the social structure & helping to bridge the gap between the different sections of society. Thereby, Inclusion is an effort to make sure that diverse learners those with disabilities and normal children get education together under a roof in the same compound and same class room irrespective of their strengths and weaknesses. It is clear that education policy in India has gradually increased the focus on children with special needs, and that inclusive education in regular schools has become a primary policy objective. Inclusive education is about how we develop and design our schools, classrooms, programs and activities so that all students learn and participate together. Inclusive education provides the places and the catalyst through which general and special teachers, students and parents come together to create quality democratic schools. Inclusion is an educational approach and philosophy that provides all students with community membership and greater opportunities for academic and social achievement. Inclusion is about making sure that each and every student feels welcome and that their unique needs and learning styles are attended and valued. In this research paper researchers pointed out some barriers in meaningful inclusive education system and suggested some measures to overcome from these challenges. These barriers are such as positive involvement of parents, lack of well- educated teachers, curriculum, resources, good infrastructural facilities, awareness, positive attitude, plans; policies are creating hurdles for extending the concept of inclusive education in India. Though there lie several obstacles and challenges to promote inclusive education it is not impossible to attain success in inclusive education in country through effective strategies and policies. To make inclusion appropriate teacher preparation for inclusive education must be made compulsory in all teacher education programmes irrespective of elementary or secondary level. Further quality resources, faculties and facilities must be supplied to each teacher education institution to make inclusive education programme successful.

**Index Terms :- Stumbling Blocks, Inclusive Education, Attitude, Awareness, Challenges, and Society etc.**

### INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

inclusive education is based on fundamental human rights. the efforts of the government of india over the last five decades have been towards providing comprehensive range of services towards education of children with disabilities. in 1974, the centrally sponsored scheme for integrated education for disabled children (iedc) was introduced to provide equal opportunities to children with disabilities in general schools and facilitate

their retention. the government initiatives in the area of inclusive education can be traced back to national educational policy, 1986, which recommended, as a goal, 'to integrate the handicapped with the general community at all levels as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence'. the rehabilitation council of india act 1992 initiated a training programme for the development of professionals to respond to the needs of students with disabilities. the national policy for persons with disability, 2006, which attempts to clarify the framework under which the state, civil society and private sector must operate in order to ensure a dignified life for persons with disability and support for their caretakers. most recent advancement is the right of children for free and compulsory education (2009) which guarantees right to free and compulsory education to all children between ages six to fourteen. for education for a child with disability, the act has to be read in conjunction with chapter v of the persons with disability act, 1995. in india, national council of educational research and training (ncert) joined hands with unicef and launched project integrated education for disabled children (pied) in the year 1987, to strengthen the integration of learners with disabilities into regular schools. in recent years, the concept of inclusive education has been broadened to encompass not only students with disabilities, but also all students who may be disadvantaged. this broader understanding of curriculum has paved the way for developing the national curriculum framework (ncf-2005) that reiterates the importance of including and retaining all children in school. inclusive education: - according to unesco, means that the school can provide a good education to all pupil irrespective of their varying abilities. all children will be treated with respect and ensured equal opportunities to learn together. inclusive education is an on- going process. teachers must work actively and deliberately to reach its goals in the 1990, inclusion captured that field after the world conference on special needs education in salamanca in 1994, with the adoption of the salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education. ninety percent of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school, says unesco through, in india, there is no formal or official definition of inclusion, it does not only mean the placement of the students with sen in regular classrooms. the draft scheme on inclusive education prepared by the mhrd (2003) uses the following definition .inclusive education means all learners, young people with or without disabilities being able to learn together in ordinary preschool provisions, schools, and community educational settings with appropriate network of support services. inclusive education means including the children with disabilities in the regular classroom that have been designed for children without disabilities (kugelmass 2004) inclusive education refers to an education system that accommodates all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. for the development of social skills and better social interaction of the student's inclusive education is the need of education system. [unicef's report on the status of disability in india 2000 states that there are around 30 million children in india suffering from some form of disability. the sixth all-india educational survey (ncert, 1998) reports that of india are 200 million school aged children (6-14 years), 20 million required special needs education. while the national average for gross enrollment in school is over 90 percent, less than five percent of children with disabilities are in school. the majority of these children remain outside mainstream education. thus it is necessary to explore current status of inclusive education in india as well as problems, prospects, challenges related to it . education is a fundamental and inalienable right of each child irrespective of his or her religion, caste, gender, race, language, social or ethnic origin as well as disability. every child should get an equal opportunity in education and thus inclusive education has become very crucial in this age for breaking down barriers and embracing all marginalized students in the mainstream education system effectively. there should be an increased effort to universalize education irrespective of any disabilities suffered by the child. children with disabilities should be admitted to regular or mainstream schools and should not be differentiated or alienated from children without disabilities. they should not be segregated and kept confined within the boundaries of special schools and denied equity in the society. these children should also have access to equal opportunities to learn in mainstream schools with other children and be entitled to quality education and facilities.

## PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education speaks for the improvement of schools in all dimensions. The very early recommendations for sending children with disabilities to mainstream schools can be traced back to 1944 in the Sargent Report followed by the setting up of the Kothari Commission in 1964. Thereafter, the Persons with Disabilities Act was enacted in the year 1995 and has been amended recently in 2016 in a very comprehensive and systematic manner giving great importance to the Rights of the Persons with disabilities in India. Section 2 clause (m) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 defines Inclusive Education as a system of education where the children with and without disabilities can learn together. It doesn't speak about giving a level playing field to these

Children as that won't be equitable. Rather it advocates for a system of teaching as well as learning that is suitable to cater the learning needs and requirements of different types of students with disabilities. Chapter III of this Act deals with the education of children with disabilities. Section 16 and 17 of the Act lay down certain measures that are very integral to implementation of inclusive education. These are as follows-

Admission without discrimination

Recreational activities, provide educational and sports facilities

Provision for reasonable accommodation

Provision for inclusive environment

Use of most appropriate languages and modes of communication

Detect specific learning disabilities and early intervention

Provision for transportation facilities

Establishment of adequate number of teacher training institutions

Training and employing teachers, professionals and staff

Establishment of resource centers, Promotion of research Any other measure as required

Provision for books, learning materials and assistive devices

Provision for scholarships

Modifications in curriculum

This Act also mandates the appropriate government to take adequate measures for protecting the persons with disabilities from being victims of any torture, cruelty, inhuman or degrading treatment. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities 2008 also stresses on the human rights of persons with disabilities and places obligations on the states to promote, protect and ensure these rights and also take measures for their successful implementation and monitoring. Inclusive Education is also an indispensable part of the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA). It promotes Universalization of Elementary Education through focusing on Access, Enrollment as well as Retention of all children in the age group of 6-14 years. It has given an impetus to the vision regarding inclusive education of Children with Special needs as it lays emphasis on the fact that without such inclusion, the very objective of Universalization of Elementary Education cannot be fulfilled.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study was undertaken with the following broad objectives:

- 1.) To study the concept of inclusive education in context of Indian scenario.
- 2.) To study the need for inclusive education in India.
- 3.) To study the problems being faced in implementing inclusive education in India by various stakeholders
- 4.) To study the future implications by the various stakeholders to cope with emerging problems and issues regarding inclusion of children with special needs

## METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Keeping in view of availability of the resources and feasibility of the present research paper, the research study is conducted on the basis of secondary sources of data. Secondary data has been collected from various books, Journals, research articles etc. The methodology of the study also includes the thoughts and writings of various authors in the stream of academics and research.

## STUMBLING BARRIERS IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN INDIA

In India, a population of 27 million lives with special needs which form approximately 2.2% of the entire Indian population. Around 4.6 million out of these belong to the age group of 10-19 years and 2 million are in the age group of 0-6 years approximately. According to the Census, only 61% of these children belonging to the age group of 5-19 years have attended some sort of educational institutions [1]. The national Census states that only 11% of children with disabilities belonging to the age group 5-18 years in urban areas and less than 1% in the rural areas were enrolled in special schools' only 7% in rural and 18% in urban areas have completed secondary education [2]. However more children with intellectual disabilities attend mainstream schools in rural areas as compared to urban areas due to lack of special schools and facilities in the rural areas but the question arises that are they being given the due care and facilities that they are entitled to under the system of inclusive education. Although Inclusive Education is a priority for the Indian Government and there have been legislations, programmes, etc to make it successful, there is still a very big gap between the policies and their implementation. There are several obstacles which hinder the effective implementation of Inclusive Education policies in India. Given the nature, diversity, composition, living standards, literacy rates, poverty index of the Indian population, implementation of Inclusive Education in India is shackled by very powerful chains and getting freed from them might take years. But for finding out the effective remedies to these problems, the first step should always be analyzing these problems. On coming across several literatures on this subject, some of the main barriers that have come into my focus are the attitudinal obstacles, financial obstacles, physical obstacles and the policy obstacles. These are followings stumbling blocks:

**Parental Attitude** - The acceptance of children with special needs or intellectual disability is very low in the Indian society. Some parents find it shameful to introduce intellectually disabled children or suffer from the notion that they are the outcomes of their past sins. Sometimes even if the parents are supportive, other family members of the joint family system in India or neighbors might not willingly accept such a child with open minds and arms. Parents mostly seek to get the right kind of help for their children. They even don't know how to deal with the behavioral challenge of their wards. Families do not have enough information about their child's particular disability, its effects and its impact on their child's capacity. This often leads to a sense of hopelessness. Parents can have apprehensions of ridiculed of their child by other children. Parents of a child with disability may prefer the protective special class to the large regular class where their child may not get attention from the teacher. It is difficult for them to avail appropriate services and programs to fulfill their child's needs. There have been occasions where the parents of a child without any special needs were also afraid that their child might 'behave' in an odd manner by being with children with special needs. Parents in India often weigh the investment on their child's education with the results that can be reaped and this adds to the reluctance on part of the parents to spend much on the education of intellectually disabled children. Not only from the family system, but these children fall prey to such negative attitudes at schools too. Schools might not want to admit them or even if they do, they hardly make any efforts to mould the curriculum or the school environment in a manner which suits the needs of these children. These lead to higher dropouts and breaks down the morale of the children. Due to lack of awareness or discussion programs to educate children without disabilities regarding ways in which they can help these children to adjust to the mainstream education system or to provide them a sense of belongingness in the schools add to the miseries of the intellectually disabled children. Children with disabilities are often bullied by their peers or kept segregated from all social activities in schools.

**Financial challenges-** In a country like ours, where a lot of people can barely afford the basic necessities of life, having a child with intellectual disability can only add up to financial burden on the parents. Regular visit to doctors, medication, counseling, support gears such as wheelchairs etc can escalate costs manifold. Also, the parents have this notion that these children have to be supported financially throughout their lifetime and thus they try to save money for the future rather than investing it on their education.

**Physical challenges-** Transportation and infrastructure form a major problem in successful implementation of Inclusive Education in India. The schools must bring about infrastructural changes to provide a comfortable and safe environment for children with special needs. Moreover, they must arrange for transportation facilities to provide barrier free access to schools. There has been a lot of concern exhibited by teachers regarding the lack of facilities that are required for inclusive education. In addition to these, availability of disability certificates is also a major physical barrier as only medical boards of district civil hospitals are empowered to issue these. In 2015, according to the figures submitted by MSJE in Lok Sabha around half of the disabled population did not have a disability certificate. Given its importance in getting access to scholarships, aids, government schemes etc., measures should be taken to make these available to more sections of the population with special needs, especially to the children in order to open the doors of barrier free education for them.

**Policy Barriers-** there is a lot of ambiguity regarding education of Children with special needs in India. On one hand the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment runs separate schools for special children and on the other hand the Ministry of Human Resource Development promotes inclusive education. This creates a lot of confusion in the minds of the people

**Lack of Competent Teacher Educator/Teachers:** Teachers are the key to success in inclusion. Here, seven essential components for Teacher Preparation Programmes should be introduced based on the experience of training teachers in several teacher education institutions. The Inclusive Teacher is a professional in education with a strong commitment to his/her community. The Teacher Preparation Programme should include subjects with high social and community content because they need to be sensitive to the needs of students and the environment. The Inclusive Teacher recognizes individual differences and implements learning strategies for all. The educational intervention is oriented to diversity and promotes learning strategies for all (equality) for quite a few and for only one (equity). These are other essential aspects in the teacher preparation Programmes. Quality, equality and equity concepts should be translated into specific actions of educative interventions. Training for sensitization towards disability and inclusion issues, and how to converge efforts for effective implementation of programmes, are of important concerns. The teacher would need to be provided with intensive training to work with various disabilities and would then act as an integration specialist or an inclusion facilitator for one or a number of schools located in close proximity Sharma, K (1992)<sup>30</sup> suggest that the curriculum for pre-service training programs should be carefully developed,. The training of general teachers at pre-service and in-service levels should address the issue of education of children with disabilities.

**Lack of appropriate teaching methodologies; Skills for adapting the curriculum; development of teaching–learning materials that are multisensory in nature; evaluation of learning.** The lack of disability friendly transport services and inaccessible building are considered by some to be far greater problems than social prejudice and negative attitudes. Besides this, architectural barrier are also an important obstacles as school buildings do not have facilities of ramps, accessible toilets, etc .In terms of school administration teaching methodology and rigid curriculum acts as a barrier. In a regular school it is difficult to provide special material and method in the instructional setting the curriculum lacks the required flexibility to cater to the needs of children with disabilities. There are limited developmentally appropriate teaching–learning materials for children both with and without disabilities.

## CONCLUSION

The teaching–learning process addresses the individual learning needs of children in a limited way.. Thus in short it can be said that lack of physical facilities and inclusive infrastructure for those with disabilities, lack of training to teachers either pre-service or in-service, to “address the learning needs of all children including those who are marginalized and disabled” (Julka, 2012), lack of pedagogical research for effective teaching in inclusive settings, lack of inclusive culture and inclusive practices in schools, lack of “knowledge base about various impairments... and how it effects the learning process” and lack of special co-educators in schools. Govt. of India., “Annual Report”, MHRD, 2009-10 point to a dire need to review the attitude, organizational structures, curriculum and pedagogical practices of education to guide a transformation regarding inclusion of all children. Universalization of education is a dream which can be achieved only if there is a harmonious effort from the government as well as the stakeholders of the system of inclusive education. Apart from Government, we also need to understand and analyze this issue from the view points of the schools, parents as well as the children themselves. The idea of inclusive education is a child of the capability approach which strives to make the disadvantaged section of the society capable instead of sympathizing with them throughout their lives. They have their right to live and have access to education. The education which has been referred should be at par with the education which is received by the children without disabilities. In no way the children with disabilities should be in a less competitive or disadvantageous position due to lack of access to mainstream schools.

For successful implementation of inclusive education system in India, the parents, teachers and even the children without disabilities have to be educated about the system and made aware of its benefits. These people play a pivotal role in the implementation process as they interact with the children with disabilities on a regular basis and form their immediate surroundings. We need to understand the difficulties of the implementation process from the viewpoints of all these groups of people to understand the barriers to inclusive education effectively. It is important to understand the real life problems that the parents of the children with disabilities face which makes them chose special schools for their children to mitigate their problems. Similarly it is equally important to analyze the barriers to inclusive education form the point of view of the teachers and school authorities. They might have certain concerns regarding taking responsibilities of Children with disabilities due to lack of teachers training, inadequate infrastructure, lack of trained staff, the extra care and supervision that these children have to be provided with, negative attitude of peers and parents of children without disabilities, social bias etc. Lack of awareness remains a problem for the failures in the implementation process but there are factors apart from lack of awareness which are causing a greater trouble in the process of universalizing education system in India. It becomes utmost necessary to analyze the barriers to understand the reason for choosing special schools over the mainstream ones or what are the factors that are keeping the children with intellectual disabilities deprived of their right to inclusive education. For a long time, the children with disabilities have been segregated and kept deprived of their right. In the present era where right to education is an essential component of right to life, these children should get equal opportunities and rights and inclusive education is one of those first steps towards lifting the barriers of segregation of the children with disabilities from the mainstream education system.

## REFERENCES

1. Abate, L. (2005). Teacher's attitude towards the inclusion of children with disability in regular schools. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Addis Ababa. AAU press.
2. Ainscow, M. (1995). Education for All; Making it happen. Keynote Address Presented at the International Special Congress, Birmingham, UK, April 10-13.
3. Ainscow, M. (2005). Understanding the development of inclusive education system. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 3(3), 5-20.
4. Dyson, A. A., and A. Millward. 2000. *Schools and Special Needs. Issues of Innovation and Inclusion*. London: Sage. [[Crossref](#)], [[Google Scholar](#)]
5. Florian, L. 2014. & JULKA "What Counts as Evidence of Inclusive Education?" *European Journal of Special Needs Education* 29 (3): 286–294. doi:10.1080/08856257.2014.933551. [[Taylor & Francis Online](#)], [[Web of Science ®](#)], [[Google Scholar](#)]
6. Govt. of India., "Draft of Inclusive Education Scheme", MHRD, 2003.
7. Govt. of India., "Annual Report", MHRD, 2009-10.
8. Hunt, P. P., and L. L. Goetz. 1997. "Research on Inclusive Educational Programs, Practices, and Outcomes for Students with Severe Disabilities." *Journal of Special Education* 31 (1): 3–29. doi:10.1177/002246699703100102. [[Crossref](#)], [[Web of Science ®](#)], [[Google Scholar](#)]
9. NCERT (1998). Sixth All-India Educational Survey. National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi.
10. UNESCO (1996). Resource Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom
11. UNESCO, Paris. UNICEF. "Examples of Inclusive Education India, United Nations Children's Fund Regional Office for South Asia" UNICEF, (2003).
12. UNESCO. 1994. *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris: UNES. [[Google Scholar](#)]
13. World Bank., "People with Disabilities in India. From Commitment to Outcomes", New Delhi: Human Development Unit, South Asia Region, (2007)
14. Zigmond, N. 2003. "Where Should Students with Disabilities Receive Special Education Services? Is One Place Better than Another?" *Journal of Special Education* 37 (3): 193–199. doi:10.1177/00224669030370030901. [[Crossref](#)], [[Web of Science ®](#)], [[Google Scholar](#)]

