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Amit Bagdi

Research Scholar,
Department of Education,
Bankura University, Block-II,
Purandarpur, Bankura, West
Bengal, India

Sanatan Sahoo

1) State Aided College Teacher-
I (SACT-I), Department of
Education, Gobinda Prasad
Mahavidyalaya, Amarkanan,
Bankura, West Bengal, India
2) Research Scholar,
Department of Education,
Bankura University, Block-II,
Purandarpur, Bankura, West
Bengal, India

Dr. Lutful Haque

Assistant Professor,
Department of Education,
Bankura University, Block-II,
Purandarpur, Bankura, West
Bengal, India

Dr. Partha Ghosh

Assistant Professor,
Department of Education,
Bankura University, Block-II,
Purandarpur, Bankura, West
Bengal, India

Corresponding Author:

Amit Bagdi

Research Scholar,
Department of Education,
Bankura University, Block-II,
Purandarpur, Bankura, West
Bengal, India

The light of inclusive education in India: Issues, challenges, and government initiatives

Amit Bagdi, Sanatan Sahoo, Dr. Lutful Haque and Dr. Partha Ghosh

Abstract

In the 21st century, inclusive education is a very indispensable and novel concept in the modern education systems; inclusive education leads to be more widely concerned with school access and education depositions for marginalized groups such as poor families, person with disabilities, and the students of different caste, creed, class, sex etc. despite of his religion, socio- economic status. Inclusive education is a broader concept in the new era towards educating all the children with or without any special needs in the same roof of mainstream school. Inclusive education is education for ALL (Zero rejection) irrespective of caste, creed, race, economy, religion, gender etc. under a same roof with the same value, equal respect, mutual trust and collaborative environment. However, there are various conceptual and practical difficulties with the terms of integration or inclusion in India. Basically this study reveals on the concept and evaluations of inclusive education & its issues, challenges, and various government initiatives taken by the Indian Government. Here the investigator used various secondary sources of data and written documents for meaningful discussion. This present study may be fruitful for teachers, students and all stakeholders to realize the duty and obligations of that peoples to build a society without any discrimination, to build a future for the forthcoming generation.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Integrative Education, Special Education, issues & challenges, government policies & initiatives

Introduction

“The problems is not to wipe out the differences but how to unite with the differences intact”
-Rabindranath Tagore

Education is the single powerful tool for achieving social justice and equality. Achieving inclusive and equitable societies in which every citizen has the opportunity to dream, grow, and contribute to the country is crucial. Above quoted lines indicate that- India is one of the most celestial countries in the world. Diversity and inclusion is a major peculiarity of our nation. India is a country of various cultures, religion, caste, class, languages, and it is 2nd highest populated democracy in the world. It has been recognize that individual differ in countless factor like motive, skill, capacity, ability, communication, and learning style. Restriction upon individual based on their deviation in social, cultural, physical, intellectual and behavioural attributes. In spite, of those kinds of discrimination, India believed in social justice and equality. (Segregation is against the law of nature.) The sun has no restriction on giving his heat and light, the wind never says no to anybody on this earth. Nature provides equal opportunities for its members to develop to their fullest abilities without any discrimination. However, inclusion is not easy in this hugely diverse country. Before independence, children with disabilities were not specially thought of in our country. But after independence various policies and plans were built regarding on disabled children of their education and rights. In our democratic country, it is imperative to provide equal opportunities to make everyone a good citizen. According to constitutional **Article 21(A)** of the Indian Constitution, all children have the fundamental right to education. Every citizen must contribute to the development of the country. The wellbeing, accomplishment, contribution, security, and success of all children are important to this nation. In this era, all educational plans and policies have promoted and supported a system of education which provides equal opportunity to all children for education.

The right of children to free and compulsory education acts (RTE Act 2009) is one of the very recent steps towards achieving this goal. All children have an equal opportunity and right to education. So many centrally sponsored schemes such as ‘Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan’, ‘Rashtriya Madhyamik Abhiyan’ and new integrated education scheme ‘Samagra shiksha Abhiyan’ all those scheme aim to ensure-“inclusive and equitable quality education for all children”. NEP 2020 aims to ensure that- “no child loses any opportunity to learn and excel because of the circumstances of birth or background”. This policy Special emphasis will be given on socially and Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) which include: gender identities (particularly female and transgender individuals), socio-cultural identities, geographical identities, disabilities, and socio-economic conditions, low income households, children in vulnerable situations, and so on. However, for achieving success in equitable and inclusive education in India we are facing several obstacles and challenges. Many problems such as, lack of positive attitude among teachers, lack of trained teachers, non-inclusive curriculum, lack of awareness among parents and others societal members, infrastructural problems, lack, irregular plans, lack of resources and so on. However, investigator hope to the all-new initiatives for special need students and new education policy (2020) takes a proper solution to overcome all the obstacles of continuation to the aims of inclusive education. It is difficult for India to expand the concept of inclusive by policy implementation in unsuccessful order.

Objectives of the study: The objectives of the study are

1. To Understand the Basic Concept of Inclusive Education.
2. To know the evolution of the Philosophy of Inclusive Education: Special Education, Integrative Education, and Inclusive Education.
3. To understand the Issues and challenges of inclusive education.
4. To review the different policies and government indicatives of inclusive education.

Methodology of the study

This study was descriptive research method and also qualitative approach used by the researchers. Therefore for the demand of the research that kind of methodologies is used to analyse the secondary data. This research work mainly based on secondary source of information like books, e-books, journal, article, websites, report of various organization, internet, blogs, written documents.

Analysis and Discussion of the study

Concerning to objective no 1

What is inclusive education?

Inclusion is one of the major challenges facing education system around the world. Inclusive education is often misunderstood as a concept that applies only to children with disabilities. Inclusive education is a more than the concept of including the children with disability in normal classroom; it is an approach to accept diversity in same roof. Inclusive education is not only towards educating the children with disability but the concept of inclusive education is much border, which is discuss below.

Inclusive education is an umbrella term and it is a new approach where given to every child equal value and respect

and there is no discrimination (zero rejection) and all children enjoy supportive, respectful, barrier less, child centric, collaborative common learning environment. Inclusive education is education for all students irrespective of caste, creed, race, economy, religion, gender etc. under a same roof with the same value and equal respect and mutual trust and collaborative environment. Inclusive education involves changing culture of traditional education system it is focused on the restructuring of school to accept and provide for the needs of all students. The ultimate aim of inclusive education is to create a society without any discrimination where all children’s diversity and differences respected, acknowledge and celebrated and to create diversity and friendly society. At last, it can be said it is a good education for all children.



According to NCFTE 2009 Inclusive education refers to-“philosophical position as well as an arrangement of institutional facilities and processes. This to ensure access and condition of success in education for everybody, including those in the margin, either with learning difficulties because of physical or mental disabilities or because of their social position”.

Conceptualised Of Inclusive Education	Equitable Education for all
	Promote on a child centric education
	Response to diversity
	Zero Rejection
	Reduce exclusion
	Respect need of all children
	Emphasize on individual difference
	Emphasize on collaboration
	Learn together to common education provision
	Equal value and respect
	Under same roof and ensure access
	Remove barriers or obstacle
	Diversity friendly
Development of more justice Society	

Concerning to objective No 2

The evolution of the philosophy of inclusive education: special education, integrative education, inclusive education

Before 18th century, persons with disabilities were not annex in consideration and were often mistaken as being possessed by evil powers, and also hateful, cursed or simply stupid that had aggravated isolation of persons with disabilities. After a long time later, change in attitude came

after Emile, a book about the education of children by Rousseau (1712- 1778). The main idea of teaching children in their own pace, abilities and children all round development in book, set the ground for person with disables. An era for special education started with work of many scholars like, Valentin Haüy, who opened a school for blind in Paris in 1784 and the incredible work of Louis Braille, Friedrich Moritz Hill (1805–74) who developed an oral method of instruction for teaching deaf. Samuel gridley howe (1851) he has originate the term “mainstreaming education” for blind and deaf children. Jean-Marc-Gaspard Itard (1775–1838) he has trained a child known as the Wild Boy of Aveyron. With the work of theorists like Edouard Seguin (1812-80), Maria Montessori (1870-1952), Edouard O Seguin (1812-1880), and wang (1881) some seeds for special education were sprout. However, Ancient education systems of India have been no opportunity to disable children and different backward sections of the society. Although there is not so much minus attitude as in the Western countries, nevertheless in the Eastern countries, no special efforts for the education and rehabilitation of disabled children can be seen in ancient era. Rather, in the ancient literature, Puranas, scriptures, etc., only compassion for the disabled children has been mentioned. Gautama Buddha did not initially recognize the importance of education for the disabled children. But in the later era, he ensured the right of the disabled to enter the monastery. However, after independent of our country such many policies, initiatives, and legislatives are conducted for the disable person and others backward section about their opportunity and legal right like RCI, IEDC, Kothari Commission (1964-66), National Education Policy (1968) etc. There is special education usually emphasize through its. That is, the main objectives of this type of education system were to provide education to the disabled children in a completely separate educational environment from the normal students. Subsequently, it is seen that this special education system is isolating children with disabilities from the mainstream of society and so many issues in this education system. To address these issues, the NPE 1986 introduce to integrate education system. Where children with mild disabilities are will be receive education along with normal students. The 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and sarva shiksha abhijan (SSA) ensured teaching for students with special needs in the least restrictive environment of general classroom with general education curricula, assessment practices and classrooms where special and general education teachers together work for the benefit of each and every student. The concept of inclusive education was adapted by SSA but could not be implemented due to various reasons like lack of resources, lack of trainee teachers, insufficient infrastructures, ignorance of parents and other persons. RTE Act 2009 (right to education for all children) legislation strengthens the philosophy that the majority of students with special needs should be moved out of segregated classrooms and the best teaching methods, accommodations, and tactics to accommodate each student's individual learning preferences. In this way, educational system shifted from segregation to inclusion. In inclusion, disabled students are taught in mainstream educational settings alongside with their nondisabled peers. Samagra shiksha Abhiyan, new education policy 2020 envisages as holistic implementation of the inclusive education for all

level of education without circumstances of birth or background. Now, is an obligation on the part of school for removing all barriers to the full participation of every students. In this practice, uniqueness of each individual is equally valued. It works on concept of “education for all”.

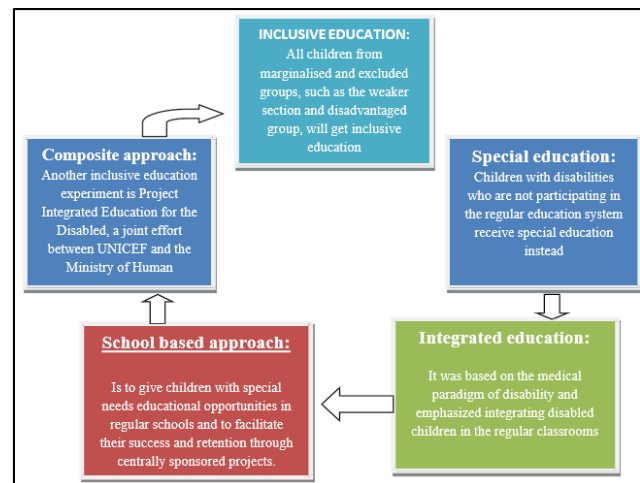


Fig 1: Changing approaches of inclusive education

Concerning to objective No 3

Issues and Challenges of Inclusive Education

The international trend toward inclusion in education is not an exception in Indian education. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the United Nations Charter, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights all recognise the right to education as a fundamental human right. It might also be looked at as an ongoing effort to remove obstacles from learning and involvement for all children and teenagers. Opportunities for collaborative learning across all learners should be provided by inclusive education. Now investigator discusses about various issues and challenges faces by implementation in inclusive education of the present education system are:-

Issues in inclusive set-up

Less Students Enrolled: The enrolment rate of children with disabilities in the mainstream educational system is at least equal to that of children without impairments. At present day only 4 % to 5% children with special needs out of 30 million have enrolled to education.

Teachers lack necessary skills: The key to successfully implementing inclusive education by the teachers. Lack of competence, appropriate knowledge, and educational qualifications are barriers to teachers achieving their stated goals.

Large class sizes: Special needs students find it difficult to fully participate in regular classes due to the size of the classes.

Inflexible Curriculum: A rigid curriculum prevents special education pupils from studying on par with regular students. To meet the varied requirements of pupils with disabilities, no particular curriculum is available.

Inadequate pre-service training and professional development: One of the major problems in inclusive

education is the lack of training and professional development for mainstream teachers at all levels.

Negative Attitude of Parents and Teachers: One of the main problems in inclusive education is the negative attitude of parents and teachers towards children with disabilities, differently able children, and children who are marginalised.

Inadequate Infrastructure: One of the major problems preventing us from achieving the goal of inclusive education is the absence of infrastructure amenities in our school.

Lack of assistive technology: In an inclusive classroom, there aren't enough assistive technologies to help the special pupils benefit fully from the lessons.

More Power Point presentations in class: We use technology today to make learning and teaching more efficient, but we also tend to disregard the requirements of special needs children when we have a variety of student types in the same class.

Techniques of Teaching: The majority of institutions only use a few predetermined methods of instruction, making it difficult for students of diverse abilities to benefit fully from the teaching and learning process.

Lack of Community Will and Participation: It appears that there is a lack of community participation and parental willingness to send their children to mainstream institutions.

Lack of political will to implement inclusive education: One of the main obstacles to putting the inclusive ideal into practise is a lack of political will to implement inclusive education.

Retention of disabled children in schools: Disability students are unable to remain in mainstream colleges since there is no peer support available to them.

Challenges in inclusive set-up

Policy implementation: The relevant authority should be serious and devoted enough to carry out inclusive education programmes as well as implement constitutional rights and provisions without taking technicalities and loopholes into account.

Social attitude towards disability: We must plan programmes to raise awareness of impairments and foster a supportive social climate for children who are differently abled and socially excluded.

Parental resistance: Through awareness campaigns and advertisements in printed and electronic media, such parents and families should be made aware of these regulations and rights.

Increased skill-based instruction: Trainees at traditional teacher education institutions should also receive training in how to deal with these kids.

Incorporate research into practise: Universities and educational institutions should establish centres for

disability studies and a chair for disability studies, as well as conduct disability-focused research and initiatives.

Peer coaching: In an inclusive educational environment, peer coaching is necessary to improve teaching and learning.

Concerning to objective No 4

Government Initiatives for Inclusion in India

After independence, India had been recommendations various policies, programmes and initiatives for effective inclusion. The Indian constitution main intention to provides all children with basic education up to age of 14, however it does not specifically mention children with disabilities. According to Indian constitution, everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and dignity. Article 45 guarantees free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 years. In 2002, Education became a fundamental right for all children in age group of 6 to 14 years based on amendment in constitution. Kothari Commission (1964-66) recommended equality of educational opportunity for the education of handicapped children and the concept of neighbourhood schools which enabled all children in the lower primary stages of the neighbourhood to attend local schools. National Education Policy (1968), it expanded the educational options available to children who are physically and cognitively challenged and created an integrated programme that allows these children to enroll in conventional schools. In 1974 to 1982, Integrated Education of Disabled Children (IEDC) programme, which was centrally sponsored, provided guidelines for the educational opportunities available to disabled students in regular classrooms, in order to support their retention in the educational system and to shift students from special schools to regular classrooms. After acquiring functional communication and daily living skills, they were supposed to be placed in regular classrooms. And it appears that the programme was designed to promote collaboration between mainstream and special education schools in order to enhance integration. The PIED & DPEP project has taken its place. Under a National policy of education (1986) Physically and intellectually disabled were incorporated into society as equal partners. For those who could attend common primary schools and those who need special education, it set a lofty goal of enrolling everyone by the end of the ninth five-year plan. The Persons with disability Act (PWD- 1995) states, "Among other things: the appropriate Government and the local authorities shall ensure that every child with a disability has access to free education in an appropriate environment till he attains the age of 18 years. It endeavours to promote the integration of students with disabilities in the normal schools." District rehabilitation centres and national programme for rehabilitation for persons with disability (NRPD): This scheme was launched in 1999. Under the scheme, financial resources are provided in state governments for initiating services at the district level. The government is using community based rehabilitation as a strategy to scale up basic rehabilitation services, and create process for empowering people with disability, their families and communities. National trust act (1999): the national trust, a statutory body under the ministry of social justice and empowerment, government of India, was set up under the "national trust for the welfare of person with autism,

cerebral palsy, mental retardation and multiple disabilities” - act 1999. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA): SSA has been operational since 2000-01 in partnership with state governments to achieve the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education. This adopts a ZERO rejection policy and uses an approach of converging various existing schemes and programmes. Inclusive education of children and youth with disability act (IECYD) 2005: Its main objective is to ensure the admission of all children with disability in mainstreamed education with trained inclusive education teachers and favourable appropriate environment. National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (2006): The National Policy for persons with disabilities seeks to create an environment that fosters: 1) Physical Rehabilitation which includes early detection and intervention, counselling and provision of aids and appliances, development of rehabilitation professionals. Educational Rehabilitation includes vocational training. 2) Economic Rehabilitation for a dignified life in society. The RTE Act (2009): After a continual demand of making the education a fundamental right from all corners, the government made the 86 Amendment of the Constitution of India (2002). The 86 Amendment introduced new Article 21A, making the right to education of children from 6 to 14 years of age a fundamental right. Article 51A (K) was added to Part IV-A of the Constitution as a fundamental duty of parents to provide opportunities for education to their children aged between 6 and 14. The Right of Children to free and compulsory education act (2009), commonly known as RTE Act (2009) was finally passed by the parliament on the 26 August, 2009 (came into effect from April 1, 2010). This act puts the responsibility of ensuring enrolment, attendance and completion on the government. The RTE Act tries to safeguard the rights of the children belonging to the disadvantaged groups and the weaker sections, protect them from any kind of discrimination and ensure their completion of elementary education. It is made mandatory that private unaided and specified category schools have to admit at least 25% of its entry level class from children belonging to weaker and disadvantaged groups. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) launched a scheme Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS) in year 2009-10 It is a centrally sponsored scheme, which replaced the earlier scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) and provides assistance for the inclusive education of the children with one or more disabilities as defined under the Persons with Disabilities Act (1995) in classes IX-XII. Under IEDSS (2015-16), 2.37 lakh students have been approved to be covered where number of CWSN girls are 107159 and number of CWSN boys are 130195 and 4960 new seats for special educators has been approved. Although number of secondary schools having disabled friendly toilets are only 17.09% of total schools (RMSA, 2014). Early childhood care and education (ECCE) 2010: the main objectives of this scheme, development of the children in a variety way, such as through group socialization, inculcation of habits, stimulation of creative learning processes, and enhanced scope for overall personality development. RPwD Act (2016), it is expected that progress in education through prevention, intervention and remediation will take a turn changing the framework for education of CwD. Policies and programmes need to be experienced by the stakeholders and reach the unreached; the priorities as it stands today are multi-faceted. To

strengthen policy, recommendations from Contemporary scientific research are significant. And the types of disabilities have been increased from existing 7 to 21. Recently 3rd national education policy of India (NEP 2020) aims to ensure that no child loses any opportunity to learn and excel because of the circumstances of birth or background.

Conclusion

The researchers came to the conclusion from the discussion above that inclusive education is a new strategy where each child is given equal value and respect, there is no rejection, and all children enjoy a supportive, respectful, barrier-free, child-centric, collaborative common learning environment. Educational opportunities for ALL (Zero Rejection) students, regardless of caste, creed, race, economic status, religion, or gender, are provided under one roof in an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, and cooperation. The ultimate goal of inclusive education is to build a more equitable society in which every child's variety and distinctions are accepted, acknowledged, and celebrated as well as to build a diverse and tolerant community. Finally, it may be concluded that all children are receiving an excellent education. It is necessary to have a long-term strategy, with each stage strengthening the groundwork for inclusive education. Gaining a better awareness of the state of the education of kids with disabilities today and how inclusive practises can be pushed can help with this. To create a strong system of inclusive education in India, the Indian government must fill in the gaps in their educational system.

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