

# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN NORTH EAST INDIA

## Issues and Challenges



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**DR. MANUJ KUMAR CHUTIA**

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION  
IN  
NORTH EAST INDIA  
Issues and Challenges



*Editor*

Dr. Manuj Kumar Chutia

**Inclusive Education in North East India : Issues and Challenges** : a collection of selected research papers and articles presented in the UGC sponsored National Seminar on 13th and 14th November, 2015 organized by Department of Education, Nowgong Girls' College in association with College of Education, Nagaon, Assam and published by the Principal, Nowgong Girls' College

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First published : September, 2018

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ISBN 978-93-85310-42-3

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Price ₹400 only.

Printed at  
Gigabytes Press & Publication,  
Milanpur, Nagaon, Assam

## FOREWORD

Inclusion is a new concept that has been introduced in the field of education most recently. It implies educational practices where children with and without disabilities participate and learn together in the same classroom or educational institution. Until recently segregation in education was followed where children with disabilities were educated either in separate classes or separate schools. It was just because of peoples' attitude and idea on requirements of children with disabilities. But after Salamanca statement in 1994, this idea has been altered and a new approach 'inclusion' has been developed to bring all children with or without disabilities under the same umbrella. The philosophy behind the concept is equality, sharing, participation and dignity of individuals. It is based on the belief that all children can learn and reach their full potential within given opportunity, effective teaching and appropriate resources.

Inclusion, by definition, refers not merely to the setting of educational institutions, but also specially designed instruction and support system for students in general and children with special need in particular in regular classrooms and community schools. A frequent resolving of the learning needs not only improves the quality of education for everyone in the classroom, but also helps in promoting awareness and acceptance of diversity. Such determination to create the most enabling environment for the children with special needs is a consultative, collaborative process involving parents, principals, teachers, specialized support service professionals and community members as a whole.

Demographically India is placed second among the countries of the world. As per 2011 census report, 2.67 crore people are differently abled in our country. Though India's North East region is naturally abundant, it is very rearward in the field of education, specially for children with special needs. This region bears the liability of 2.73% differently abled persons of the nation's total, but the educational facilities for them are awfully insufficient due to which a large number of CWSN are still out of the educational scenario.

That is why; inclusive education can play a vital role to accomplish the educational demands of children with special needs that requires a shifting paradigm to form complete inclusive settings in educational institutions. This seminar highlighted the various issues related to education for differently abled persons in the region. The observations, presentations, debate and discourse of various scholars and researchers during the seminar would certainly help to resolve some of the major issues in the field of inclusive education.

I offer my sincere gratitude to all the resource persons, scholars, guests and academicians who actively participated in the seminar organized by the Department of Education of our college on the theme 'Inclusive Education in North East India: Issues and Challenges' and enriched our knowledge with their scholarly works, ideas and observations in the field. Our endeavours will be honoured with success if this volume of selected research papers and allied articles can offer any insight for policy makers, analysts, research workers, CWSN activists and the common people. I thank the department of education for their untiring effort to complete this scholastic work of high repute.

**Dr. Balin Kumar Bhuyan**  
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## Editor's View

Education for persons with disabilities is always a deep concern for the community and the state for the development of children with special needs in particular and national development as a whole. Traditionally disability was considered as a result of peccadillo committed and the disabled were neglected, hated and often punished by the society. So persons with disabilities led a very pathetic life, but gradually this attitude has trimmed down and people no longer believe the established fact that disability is the outcome of sins committed in the preceding life. Though the attitude is changing, their educational provisions are still very insufficient.

Initially children with special needs (CWSN) were educated by segregation in special schools, where no chance of assimilation with other students was possible. Segregation was followed by integration where students with special needs were absorbed into the mainstream classrooms. It focuses on children with special needs with different techniques, services and methods to support them to become accustomed into the mainstream education. But these segregation and integration are unable to fulfill the growing educational demands of children with special needs. Therefore, a new approach 'inclusion' was introduced to cater to the educational needs of children with special needs. It is a very comprehensive term which implies that all learners, young people with or without disabilities are being able to learn together under the same umbrella through access to common pre-school provisions, schools and community educational setting with an appropriate network of support services. It is the process of educating children in a way that benefits all students and entails a clear

participation as well. Hence, it focuses not only on students with special needs but others as well. This is why the inclusive approach is considered as 'education for all' where students are not encouraged to fit into the mainstream education, but the school changes to accommodate the needs of all.

Sending children with special needs to mainstream schools in India was first recommended by Sargent Report (1944) and again by Kothari Commission (1964-66). But the situation remains unchanged and the special schools with segregation dominated the whole situation until recently. The concept 'inclusion' has become very popular all over the world after 'Salamanca' statement in 1994 where resolutions were taken to spread up inclusive educational set up in all educational institutions. Thus segregation and integration have been replaced by inclusion to spread the concept 'education for all' around the world including India.

Inclusion is a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners together. Though inclusion has been paid tremendous emphasis, it is still a major threat for educational institutions from the point of view of its implementation. This volume is the outcome of a national seminar on 'inclusive education in North-east India: issues and challenges' organized by the Department of Education, Nowgong Girls' College. The research papers and articles included in this volume strive to replicate the ground reality of inclusive education by highlighting its implementation status, problems and prospects with particular reference to North-east India. The observations of different scholars reflect the diverse factual status of inclusive education in the respective study areas.

Inclusive education is a challenging task. It is challenging from administrative as well as teaching-learning point of view. In her paper *Dr. Sanpreety Gogoi* identified many challenges which really put pressure on teachers while meeting the needs of the inclusive classroom. Teachers of inclusive settings, though they have training of short term duration feel uncomfortable and burdened while trying to meet the challenges of children with special needs along with the normal ones. Suggesting a lot of recommendations *Dr. Gogoi* holds that practical based training programmes and realistic campaign to ascertain definite roles of all its stakeholders are very essential to make inclusive education more effective.

Holding up the inclusive practices, *Dr. Suapna Neog* minutely observed the vacillations and prejudices of parents of non-disabled children and their belief on disability as an infectious disease. However *Dr. Neog* is of the view that without a positive attitude of parents and common people towards inclusive education and willingness of the agencies involved, all other efforts would be meaningless for making inclusion a successful one in reality.

Success of 'inclusion' depends largely on the active involvement of all its stakeholders. Governmental effort alone cannot make it a complete success. Thus, initiatives from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are trying to eradicate the major hurdles in the field of inclusive education. *Mridul Chetia*, in his paper highlights the role of NGOs towards inclusive education by initializing and implementing new projects and programmes for children with special needs (CWSN) by creating mass awareness, resource mobilization and assisting support services to CWSN. In his case study *Mr. Chetia* has taken up different services in the form of early intervention of disability, special care, vocational training, guidance and counseling, speech and hearing intervention and rehabilitation of CWSN with particular reference to Upper Assam Handicapped Centre, Bokakhat.

*Debjani Goswami* deals with the issues, government policies on inclusive education. She discusses many issues of inclusive education with particular reference to India. Further she points out some prominent hindrances for which inclusion has not been rightly met. Emphasizing on balanced curriculum in the inclusive institutions she highlights the efficiency of teachers too who can handle the individual needs by caring for all children. For this a positive paradigm shift to complete inclusion is a must.

Mass media plays a very vital role in transforming societies by broadcasting wide coverage of information as the primary objectives of media are to inform, educate and entertain the largest possible audience in general and inclusive education in particular. By terming mass media as 'passive agencies' of education, *Dr. Bala Lakhendra* and *Bhupati Kashyap* hold that they can influence the attitude and behaviour of the people indirectly. Further they lay stress that the teacher can use mass media to improve instruction through the wise selection and utilization of modern media of communication to make classroom transactions more vivid,

interesting and providing quality education in inclusive settings too.

*Dr. Asomi Chulihu* and *Rajen Mandal* have taken the opinion of post graduate students towards inclusive education and they observed that inclusive education is about building friendship, membership and having opportunities. They further observed that in inclusive settings children learn at their own pace and style within a nurturing learning environment. Highlighting inclusive education as a child's right and not as privilege they also observed that respect and understanding grow when children with different abilities and cultures play and learn together.

Teachers' attitude towards inclusive education plays a very prominent role in actual implementation of its various provisions. Studying teachers' attitude towards inclusive education *Dr. Manuj Kumar Chutia* observed that locality and gender don't have any role to play for developing any sort of positive frame of mind towards inclusive education. He also perceived that apart from infrastructural facilities and available human resources, positive mind set from every corner in general and teachers in particular are more crucial to make inclusion more effective from the pragmatic point of view.

Studying on attitude of normal developing children's parents towards inclusive education *Dr. Sima Kalita* and *Debjani Borah* observed the fearfulness of such parents for not paying proper attention to their child as teachers would have to spend all extra time with the children who have special needs. However, they firmly believe that inclusion can be successfully implemented by adapting curriculum for all children, preparing responsible teachers and more allotment of financial assistance to inclusive schools.

Highlighting on issues and constitutional provisions on inclusive education *Dr. Kishore Kumar Sarmah* laid emphasis on proper implementation of constitutional provisions as well as different acts to meet up the issues of children with special needs. He discusses the different programmes and schemes taken up from the Indian perspective to make inclusive education more pragmatic. He however realized that without proper implementation all legislations will remain as statements of pious interest rather than vibrant proactive instruments.

Studying on attitude of secondary school teachers on inclusive education *Sayanika Deka* observes that they have predominantly positive

attitude towards children with special needs except visually and hearing impaired.

Positive attitude of teachers in inclusive settings is very much desirable without which all efforts of successful implementation of inclusive education would go in vain. *Dr. Mun Kalita* and *Jonali Borah* concluded their paper by asking to organize more awareness programmes for teachers of all levels for appropriate inclusion.

In their study, role of civil societies and NGOs towards inclusive education *Rathindra Narayan Das* and *Mridul Kanti Malukar* are of the view that inclusion is a very serious problem and therefore, without the active involvement of local communities complete inclusion is impossible. They highlighted the various activities done by different NGOs of Assam in the field of special education with particular reference to 'Ghurou' and 'Renaissance' of Luming area.

Many people and institutions are working dedicatedly in supporting children with special needs. *Rosy Deka*, *Dr. Jonali Mudoi* and *Lalita Adhikary* have taken up the case of Montfort School which is one of the few institutions in the country that is devoted to inclusive education following the ideals of St. Louis Montfort to illuminate the lives of children with special needs with expectations, abundance and affluences.

India's north east is the most isolated and underprivileged region and majority of its population don't have access to services for rehabilitation. Expressing these views *Pardip Kumar Das* and *Biswajit Roy* in their paper converse the challenges and execution strategies of inclusive education for children with special needs.

Emphasizing on major challenges in inclusive education and proper implementation of its different aspects *Krishna Ghosh* and *Monaj K. Sharma* hold that the success of inclusive education largely depends on teachers' efforts and their collaboration with authorities, supervisors, policy planners etc. They also discuss the necessities of mass awareness, skillful teacher and utilization of government funds to meet the challenges of inclusive education.

Many programmes and policies have been taken by the government to meet the challenges of children with disabilities and various activities have been done by different NGOs in the field of special education. But government initiatives and activities of some NGOs fail to draw the

attention of common people. Studying teachers' and parents' attitude on role of government and NGOs Dr. Binat Kumar Panyang and Achyut Kumar Das have observed significant difference of parents and teachers attitude towards the roles of Government and NGOs related to inclusive education.

*Nilotpal Chakravarty* in his paper points out that the status of inclusive education in Udalguri area is not at all satisfactory although a huge number of differently abled children have been identified. He explained the inclusive practices laid down there in the light of their disability status, educational progress and from the economic point of view.

The prime objectives of the seminar were to explore the status, issues, challenges and implementations of government policies to fulfill the overall needs of children with special needs with particular reference to North east India. During the two days seminar these issues have been debated, discoursed, interacted and this volume is the result of those endeavour. Hope the insights thrown in the form of different papers and articles would help policy makers, executors, workers and the persons concerned in the field of inclusive education and make it a grand success.

5<sup>th</sup> September, 2018  
Nagaon

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## **Challenges faced by teachers in managing inclusive classroom: the case of Golaghat district of Assam**

■ **Dr (Mrs.) Sampreety Gogoi**

### **ABSTRACT**

*The study aimed to analyze the challenges faced by teachers in managing inclusive class room of Golaghat district of Assam. The study employed qualitative method i.e Focus group discussion and observation method. Ten numbers of schools from each five blocks of Golaghat District were purposively selected where children with special needs (CWSN) were enrolled. The finding revealed that although the teachers of the school were trained in inclusive education, they feel that they were not competent enough to teach the student both in general and CWSN together in inclusive environment. The teachers emphasized that workshop and training should be ongoing until educator feel that they are well equipped to teach in inclusive classroom. The teachers also felt that there is shortage of necessary resources and necessary teaching learning materials. The Sarba Siksha Abhiyan Mission and the Education Department should take the initiative to organize training, workshops and conferences for teachers, parents and other stake holders who are associated with CWSN. It can be concluded that success of inclusive education will largely depends when all stake holders understand their role in the provision of inclusive education.*

**Key Words:** *Challenges, Management, Inclusive education, Teachers.*

**Introduction :**

The concept of inclusive education is a welcome development; the fundamental principle of the inclusive schools is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences, they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students accommodating both, different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricular, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnership with their communities. In the context of education for Children with Special Needs (CWSN) there has been gradual evolution and transition from special education to integrated education to inclusive education. The Sarva Siksha Abhiyan Scheme of the Central Government aims to achieve universalization of elementary education and in this process includes CWSN. Inclusive classroom are going to be successful if there is change in the traditional general education classroom of student in row, sitting quietly, reading, taking notes and filling in worksheet. Instead students with disabilities could be benefited from the classroom if two basic changes in classroom practices were made and these includes, modifying the curriculum to enhance relevance for each student and modifying instructional technique.

The Government undying efforts over the year to curb the problem of exclusion among CWSN, in this regard multipronged approach is required to meet their special needs. For Booth (2000) inclusion goes beyond the school and is concerned with reducing exclusion from cultures. This means valuing and treating everyone with respect in the school and community, which calls for having faith in each individual that one has the ability to contribute to the society.

A variety of options should be made available so that the divergent needs of CWSN could be effectively met. All children are unique, special children have special needs. They require disability specific instructions and support services. In the long run the general teachers training programme should include adequate content on pedagogy and skills at various levels. The support service should

ideally be available in the school itself. For the effective implementation general classroom teachers need training on understanding the educational and emotional needs of these children.

**Purpose of the study :**

Despite many efforts being put forth for the successful implementation of inclusive education in lower primary schools of Golaghat district there are still numerous challenges a teacher faces in the implementation of the programme. Therefore, the study set out to achieve the following objective.

1. To analyze the challenges faced by the teacher in managing inclusive education programme in lower primary schools of Golaghat district of Assam.

**Research Methodology :**

The research on which this article is based adopted a qualitative approach. Ten schools from each five blocks namely (East, West, North, South and Central) were purposively selected from Golaghat district of Assam. The schools which had CWSN were selected. A focus group interview, discussion and observation methods were used to collect the data from the teachers. Some open ended questions were administered and they were therefore free to express their own opinion. They were requested to give honest answers. Their inputs about what they lack as educators, availability of facilities, their competencies in managing CWSN, challenges encountered in the implementation of inclusion and different strategies that could promote the management of inclusive education were asked. Note taking and mobile recording were undertaken simultaneously for the analysis.

Observation method was mainly used because it provides the researcher with ways to check for non verbal expression of feelings, determine who interact with whom, grasp how participants communicate with each other and check for how much time is spent on various activities (Schmuck, 1997). It helped the researcher to observe events that informant were unable or unwilling to share. The

observation method was mainly used to see the challenges encountered in the implementation of inclusion method in the classroom.

The open ended questions were analyzed to sort out the similarities and differences of the view expressed by the respondents. Few focus group discussions that were recorded in mobile were transcribed.

### **Results :**

The road to achieve inclusive education is a long and varied one, on which challenges and opportunities will arise. From the data gathered, few of the criteria's were identified as challenges faced by teacher in managing inclusive classroom. They are –

#### **1. Capacity building of teachers :**

For the effective implementation of inclusive education for all types of CWSN general classroom teachers need training or understanding the education and emotional needs of the children. Majority of the participant showed that they are not adequately trained in inclusive education. But they thought that given an opportunity to practice the basic classroom management techniques, they can make it. Although participant agreed that they had attended short term training on inclusive education organized at block level by Sarba Siksha Abhiyan but they strongly felt that the time and duration allocated for training was insufficient. The frequency of attending training is also very less. They emphasized that workshop and training should be ongoing until educators feel that they are well equipped to teach in inclusive classroom effectively. Hence, the need of foundation course for in-service general teachers to complete 90 days course, with inbuilt contact classes for 3 weeks duration should be provided to complete full fledged training programme leading to development in education of CWSN.

In this regard one of the participants revealed that she is not trained and cannot handle an inclusive classroom and find difficulties in identification and imparting proper support.

#### **2. Inadequate competency :**

It was revealed from the focus group discussion that the teacher lack the competency they require as an educator to handle the class smoothly, therefore they found the class room environment every stressful and less joyful. It also goes back to training and if the teachers are not competent enough it becomes a problem and will affect the successful implementation of the programme.

#### **3. Insufficient materials :**

There have been shortage of resources which includes modified desk-bench, text book, large print books, talking books for the blind, braille kit and machine, classroom and toilets with proper ramps to facilitate the movement of students with physical disabilities. Special education requires screen reading, compact disc and also talking calculators. There is also lack of proper activity based teaching learning materials (TLM) in the classroom. Participants when asked if they are competent enough to use different TLM and use of Braille and sign language their answers were negative. They viewed that only short duration training was received on Braille and sign language which is not at all sufficient. They suggested that for proper implementation of the programme all stake holders should get training because even parents need to help their children using the device or technique at home when doing home assignments.

#### **4. Student teacher ratio :**

Some times in some schools the number of students in regular classrooms increase that hinder the teacher from giving individual attention especially to student with special needs. Sometime due to negligence of the teacher the CWSN do not get interest and adequate attention which lead to absenteeism or dropout in many cases. This finding was revealed from the evaluation of attendance register maintained by the class teacher.

### 5. Time allocation :

Samples mentioned that there is very less progress in the classroom because one needs more time to explain concepts to CWSN. The quality of teaching is affected when both the normal and CWSN were taught in the same class, since the teacher concerned had to divide their time and attention between the two category of learners and this made the syllabus coverage a very slow process.

### 6. Assessment :

The findings also revealed that the teacher complained about continuous and comprehensive evaluation because they find it difficult to implement for CWSN as they could not go in the same pace with the general children. Due to lack of competencies and confidence the teachers find it difficult to assess the learners and determine when the learners need extra support.

### Discussion :

The school authority expressed that they face many challenges in trying to implement inclusive education. The results were revealed from the focus group discussion and observation method. Swart and Pettipher (2007) say majority of teachers are faced with a difficult task in their classroom now-a-days. These challenges are brought by bringing learners with special needs to regular classrooms where teachers are expected to continue to use the existing curriculum to teach learner who were previously not in the mainstream. The implementation of inclusive education is yet not optimum because of many challenges. For example, the children, parents and teachers involved in this programme are not ready to participate fully in the programme. So far those who go to regular schools are those whose intelligence is average and above and ready to participate in regular activities. According to the findings of the study many teachers agreed to the fact that their professional training was inadequate to take charge and impart knowledge and skill to CWSN. According to Landsberg (2011) educators who teach learners with barriers to learning require

specialized training. The basic professional training such as the entry level, must prepare the educators to respond to a wide range of learners needs. All educators must be prepared to accommodate diversity among learners and to recognize the need of some learners for alternative instruction. The problem is further compounded by the fact that the curriculum is inflexible and unavailability of instructional materials and inadequate teaching strategies. The environment is also not conducive for the CWSN and most schools are inaccessible to CWSN. In addition there is also lack of parental involvement. Parental factor has well contributed to the problem of exclusion in that the parent of CWSN suffered extreme stigmatization by the society some time. Few parents were also found to be ignorant about their child in capabilities since they have not taken their children to the area of assessment. In some case the members of the community is also very unsupportive and these parents were left to struggle with their problems and also most of these parents were fighting with poverty. Parents and CWSN themselves had important contribution to make to shape the implementation of inclusion (Lindsay, 2007).

More numbers of students may be viewed as an obstacle to the successful implementation of inclusive education (Westwood, 2004). Although the teachers felt that inclusive education is very necessary but teachers resent it because of the added workload. Responses revealed that teachers have concern with work load that will be increased. This is similar with what Engelbrecht *et al.* (2012) say. He states that inclusive education makes an additional demand on teachers especially those in general classes because they are not used to diversity. It is nevertheless the most important suitable route to follow in order to reach the goal of implementing the programme.

The Sarba Siksha Abhiyan Assam is trying to take the initiative to enroll the CWSN and implement inclusive education in the school but it should not meant dumping a child with disability into a regular education classroom with little support from teachers as they lack the adequate training and development. Since the Government has declared primary school education free for all children and therefore the financial

burden was partly settled. As the families with special needs were mostly from poor economic background and such parents do not even have the basic education which would make them want their children to be better than themselves in academic aspects.

For the effective implementation of inclusive education the teachers should be trained and there should be close convergence with health department, psychologist, and social workers. The concerted efforts of all these key stakeholders should guide CWSN, develop their capacities as thinkers and make them have the awareness of their capacities as thinkers: capable of developing skills to become increasingly independent on learners. Since the Sarba Siksha Abhiyan is providing necessary support in inclusive education therefore the teachers should not feel it as burden and try to understand different concepts and put to them the practice and try to implement it within the limited resources.

#### **Conclusion :**

The study has come up with several findings which lead us to arrive to the conclusion that the teacher generally lacked the confidence to include CWSN into class and also face it as extra burden. This may be the result of lack of proper training and which lead to negative attitude of the teacher toward the programme. There will be no progress if these challenges are encountered by the teacher all the times. It can therefore be concluded that the success of inclusive education will largely depend on aggressive, realistic campaign to enable all stake holders in education understand their role in the provision of inclusive education.

#### **Recommendations :**

1. SSA should address the problem and impart adequate training to the educators of primary school.
2. A common unit should be designed especially a sign language and Braille machine and reading of Braille text book to equip the teachers with approved skill to handle

the inclusive classroom.

3. Intensive training and involvement of parents to perform their role in ensuring success of inclusive education.
4. Fund should be allotted to school and SMC to help in processing special facilities for special need such as talking board, modified desk and chair, Braille and computer for ICT in education.
5. All possible effort to improve and modify the existing physical facilities to make sure that the environment is barrier free.
6. The most important is a trained teacher or resource teacher (specialized in disability) is to be posted to school for catering to the need of inclusive education

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# **Inclusive Practices: Attitude of Parents and Common People Towards Inclusive Education**

■ **Dr. Swapna Neog**

## **ABSTRACT**

*Inclusive education means education of disabled children in common with others in general school with provision for extra help for the disabled. It refers to integrating the physically and mentally handicapped children with the non-disabled children in regular classroom and providing specialized services to meet their special needs. The education and care of disabled children all over the world has surpassed many significant phases. It has travelled from the era of neglect, extermination and isolated institution or special schools settings or segregated classroom settings to the present era governed by the requirements and demands of the provision of inclusive education. This has been done for bringing all types of disabled or exceptional children in mainstream in the true spirit of providing equal opportunities and access to all children irrespective of their disabilities or non-disabilities.*

*The attitude of community in general and the attitude of parents in particular towards the education of the disabled have undergone change with the development of society and civilization. In the first phase, disabled children were treated with hostility and were neglected. They were considered as 'Curse of God' and a burden for the parents. Mankind was subjected to a myth that the disabled are useless, incapable of doing anything on their own. They were considered to be incapable of receiving education in general schools.*

*So they were educated in special schools being separated from their parents and their non-disabled peers. It has now been realized that like other members of the society, the disabled must have the same rights to education, work and full participation in the society. But still the parents of the non-disabled child are prejudiced that disability is a disease and it can spread to their child if they mix up with disabled children. Inclusion often requires a shift in people's attitude and values. Such change takes time and involves significant reassessment of conceptions and role behaviour. The paper is an attempt to study the attitude of the parents and common people towards inclusive education.*

**Key words:** *Attitude, Curve, Prejudice*

## **Introduction :**

Inclusive education is a process that involves the transformation of schools and centers of learning to cater for all children- including boys and girls, students from ethnic and linguistic minorities, rural population, those affected by HIV and AIDS, those with disabilities and difficulties in learning and to provide learning opportunities for all youth and adult as well. In the present discussion we are trying to focus on the disabled children who are now regarded as an integral part of general education. Inclusion is a concept which emerged as a philosophy in antithesis of segregation. It called a halt to the system of providing education to the children in segregating settings of special school advocated to make provision for their education in the regular schools. Inclusive education implies synchronization of the educational needs of the normal children and the educational requirements of the children with special needs, so as to evolve a common curriculum with a view to provide education to all in regular schools itself. It is a flexible and individualized support system for children and young people with special educational needs. According to Michael F. Giangreco (1997) "Inclusive education is a set of values, principles and practices that seeks more effective and meaningful education for all students.

regardless of whether they have exceptionality labels or not." It aims to integrate and include the education of the disabled children with the general system of education so that the education of the disabled and non disabled may proceed side by side fulfilling the needs and objectives of both the groups without any discrimination.

### **Historical Perspective of Inclusive Education :**

The education of disabled children never received such amount of consideration and special efforts by government and non-government agencies in past as in the present days. The attitude of the general people and parents of disabled children towards the education of the disabled have undergone changes with the development of society and civilization. The education and care of disabled children all over the world has surpassed many significant phases in its travelling from the era of neglect and extermination or special schools or segregated classroom settings to the present era governed by the requirements and demands of inclusive education. Special education, being relatively a quite new term, does not possess a long history as compared to the history of disability and its education which may be said to be as old as the history of the mankind. For looking into this history, it may be divided into seven eras.

The era of exclusion, where disabled children excluded from the society through quite horrified measures like killing, burning, exilement and abandoning etc. Then came an era of acceptance where disability was regarded as a subject of amusement and ridicules. The next era was known as era of prohibition, legal discrimination, and witchcraft in the name of religion. Then dawned an era of sympathy and asylum with the help of saintly influences dominated by church and other religious authorities in the world. The Renaissance movement spread in 17<sup>th</sup> century in the western world, brought out a new era of hope to the disabled children in the shape of establishing special schools for special categories of disabled children. With the advent of 20<sup>th</sup> century, there began a new era in the history of disabled education in the shape of moving from the isolated setting special schools to the segregated

settings of the special classes within the regular schools. The last modern era in the history of disabled education belongs to the era of inclusive settings. Most of the countries of the world under the UN initially have now enacted legislative laws for making arrangement for the education of disabled children. USA has been the first country in 1975, to come up with a legislative step for the implementation of the inclusion as a policy in all states of USA through its Education for All Handicapped Children Act now known as "The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)."

The Indian scenario with regard to its history of disabled education is not much different than the global scenario. There have been instances in earlier ancient history of a quite humane treatment and indiscriminating education to the disabled, in Vedic era, we have glaring example of 'Ashtavakra' with a chronic orthopaedic impairment becoming a great scholar by virtue of the educational facilities available to all irrespective of their abilities or disabilities. The great Rishis were of the firm believes on the theory of Karma. So they were of the opinion to give ample opportunities to the disabled to learn the art of self actualization and doing well in the life for getting better result in the next cycle of life. The rulers like Ashoka, Harsha and Akbar the Great, who followed their preaching earned much fame by establishing hospitals and asylum for the disabled and destitute. Under the colonial rule, India had very marginal and insignificant provisions for the education of its children, including the disabled. After independence, India tried to focus on the education of its children including the disabled and thus various provisions and policies were made for make it success. In its constitution, India laid down special provisions through the article 45 stating the free and compulsory primary education to all children up to the age of 14 years. The Kothari Commission (1964-66) suggested the government to mainstreaming of disabled students with the non- disabled students in normal schools. The National Policy on Education 1986 laid much emphasis on education of disabled children through its Section 4.9. A very significant landmark in the history of disability education in India has been the enactment of The

Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995. It has now arrived with a much needed policy in the name of The National Policy for Person with Disabilities in February, 2006, for education and rehabilitation of disabled population.

#### **Attitude of Parents and Common people Towards Inclusive Education:**

Prior to 19<sup>th</sup> century there were isolated instances of acceptance, kindly care, and education of disabled children. In the second half of the twentieth century, new thinking and new realizations have opened new directions for education of disabled children. It is now realized that a disabled child is not a different kind of person. He is a child with special needs. Like all other members of the society, the disabled must have the same rights to education, work and full participation in the society. For successful inclusion of disabled children in education, common people and parents of children with and without disabilities should be involved in the process. Attitude of parents and common people have enormous influence on inclusion of children with disabilities in regular school. Numerous authors identified the attitudes as a major barrier to non discrimination in education for people with disabilities.

There seems to be an abundant literature on attitude of parents and common people towards inclusive education. The prejudice mindset of the non-disabled children that disability is a disease and it can be spread to their child if mix up with disabled or child with special needs, is a major hurdle. Several variables are related to the attitude of parents and common people, such as socio-economic status, level of education, experience with inclusion and type of disability. Through wide spread promotion of inclusive education, the awareness among parents of disabled and non-disabled children has increased but it is still very nominal. A series of studies revealed that positive school climate is incorporated with inclusive education. A powerful influence of parents of disabled children can contribute more to create awareness among common people and parents of non disabled children regarding inclusive education. Kane, E. (2004) studied on HIV/AIDS victims and their education in Sub Saharan Africa. The study revealed that mostly

victims were from poor socio-economic level and the parents were not at all concerned about their education. The common people of the society generally neglected those victims and education for them was not at all possible in any level. The study of John Elkins (2003) in Australia revealed that many parents were in favour of inclusion, that some would be if additional resources were provided. Parental occupations reflected the favourable attitude towards inclusive education. While parents gained much satisfaction when they were successful in helping their child, they were not as frustrated when they were unable to help. Most parents were hurt emotionally by their child's limitation. They were well aware of the problem and very collaborative with experts. The most highly supported attitudes of parents were the resource for successful inclusion. Parents were generally supportive of their child with disability travelling to school with siblings. Many of the parents favoured inclusion, some would if additional resources were provided, and a small group of parents favoured special placement. There were a limited number of negative attitude to inclusion reported by parents. The Indian scenario with regard to the attitude of parents and common people is not different than other developing countries of the world.

Supporting the right to education and protecting the best interests of children with disabilities is complicated by the fact that many of the most serious challenges rest not with them but the society and education system that fail to provide them with the opportunities to which they are entitled. Inclusive education must respond to all pupils as individuals, recognizing individuality as something to be appreciated and respected. Inclusive education responding to special needs will thus have positive returns for all. All children and young people of the world, with their individual strengths and weaknesses, with their hopes and expectations, have the right to education.

#### **Observation and Conclusion :**

The era of inclusive settings, represents the modern era and latest development in the history of special/ disability education. The



beginning of this era may be traced as back as 1970s with the evaporation of the optimism surrounding the era of segregated settings of the special classes. A new wave of change in the name of upholding Human Rights, providing equity and equality of educational opportunities to all children, gave birth to a strong build up in favour of inclusion. Internationally the drive towards inclusion was fuelled up by a number of initiatives taken worldwide under the leadership of world bodies like UNO and World Bank. Looking at all this, we observe some basic points to be noted:

1. Encouragement should be provided by the community for including children with disabilities in regular classroom of their own locality.
2. Parents should be more concerned to send their children with disabilities to the regular classroom settings.
3. The general education system should always be ready to accept the responsibility for education of children with disabilities.
4. More awareness programmes should be organized by government organizations and non-government organizations.
5. More literacy programmes should be organized in the remote areas and among general people.
6. Parents of the children with non-disabilities should be encouraged through seminars, workshops to co-operate with disabled children.
7. Awareness raising should involve both better understanding of inclusive education and that societies become more tolerant and understanding.

Inclusive education thus needs to be implemented with full rigour in order to fulfill the mandate of 'Education for All' as guaranteed by the 'Fundamental Right to Education' declared by the 86<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act in 2002 and enacted as a law in the year 2009. With the implementation of The Persons with Disabilities Act in 1995, Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 and adoption of National Policies for Persons with Disabilities, 2006

and National Policy for Children 2013, the inclusive education system will depend on how educators, parents, community personnel and educational system work together. NGOs will certainly be very instrumental in such situations. The curriculum designer may help in changing the attitude of people towards people with disabilities. A large number of trained teachers will be required to make the programme a success. Inclusive education for disabled children is a fast growing field. In a new area like integrated education for disabled children, issues, concerns and controversies are bound to occur. Our knowledge about children's behaviour, particularly of disabled children, remains incomplete, partial and hypothetical. With this limited knowledge and hypothetical data we are teaching disabled children together with others in the regular classroom. This will be a very difficult task but "where there is a will, there is away."

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# **Role of NGOs towards Inclusive Education for CWSN of Assam with special reference to Golaghat district**

■ **Mridul Chetia**

## **ABSTRACT**

*The Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play an important role in imparting education to children with special needs (CWSN). They have made a significant contribution to promote education by initializing and implementing new projects and programmes for CWSN. It is estimated that in India, about 30,000 to 1 lakh NGOs are actively involved in creating awareness, mobilizing resources and actual delivery of support and services to CWSN. In Assam also a large number of Non Governmental Organizations are taking responsibilities for promoting inclusive education for children. The district Golaghat is not the exception of this. This paper focuses on the involvement of NGOs associated with Axom Sarba Shiksha Abhijan Mission for promoting education among the children with special needs in Golaghat district of Assam.*

**Key Words:** *Inclusive Education, NGOs, CWSN, Golaghat*

### **Introduction :**

The democratic and human-rights based intent of Inclusive Education is defined in the Salamanca Statement, and represented in the "recognition of the need to work towards 'schools for all' – institutions which include everybody, celebrate differences, support learning, and respond to individual needs". A commitment to this approach is central to UNICEF's work in the Central Eastern

Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States Region, which seeks to build Inclusive Education systems that promote schools based upon a child-centered pedagogy capable of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. The merit of such schools is not only that they are capable of providing quality education to all children; their establishment is a crucial step in helping to change discriminatory attitudes, in creating welcoming communities and in developing an inclusive society. A change in social perspective is imperative. UNESCO defines inclusive education as 'a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the state to educate all children'. Inclusive education is not a marginal issue, but is central to the achievement of high-quality education for all learners and the development of more inclusive societies. In 2008, UNESCO argued that a broad concept of inclusive education 'can be viewed as a general guiding principle to strengthen education for sustainable development, lifelong learning for all and equal access of all levels of society to learning opportunities so as to implement the principles of inclusive education'.

The role of Non Government Organizations (NGOs) in imparting education to Children With Special Needs (CWSN) all over the world cannot be undermined. In fact, the education of CWSN began in India only with the setting up of special schools. "The existing policy encourages NGOs to initiate, undertake and implement projects and programmes to promote education of CWSN. To promote meaningful, effective and sustainable action, both the Government and the NGOs work in close partnership. It is estimated that there are 40 lakh local mandals existing in India. Of these, 30,000-1.00 lakh NGOs are active in the social and development sector." The NGOs are actively involved in creating awareness, mobilizing resources and in actual delivery of

support and services to CWSN. The key role of NGOs is in mobilizing community participation. The NGOs have made a significant contribution in the area of disability through the activities of early intervention, assessment, therapeutic services, parents' education, formation of self-help groups. Their objectives also cover organizing training programmes for rural rehabilitation workers, special educators, teachers and parents, CWSN and the community. Assam along with rest of the country has a very large number of disabled children and most of them are out of school. Universalisation of Elementary Education can not be achieved unless 5-10 percent children who have physical or intellectual impairments are brought to school. Mild to moderate disabled children are to be integrated in general stream of formal education. To provide technical support NGO will be identified to work as District / Block Resource Organisation. The main aim and objectives of the paper is to highlight the activity of the NGOs of Assam involving in teaching learning processes of CWSN.

#### **Review of Literature :**

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the NGOs have played an active role in India to impart education to CWSN. This led to the establishment of the first school for the Deaf in Bombay in 1883 and the first school for the Blind at Amritsar in 1887. A number of special schools for the Blind and Deaf were set up before the end of the century. Thus, the NGO run special school tradition, as a prominent mode of providing education to CWSN, became deep-rooted. This tradition went unquestioned till the mid 50s. But as these schools began to increase in number, their disadvantages of giving birth to a segregated culture and limited coverage of CWSN became evident. Moreover, it tended to be expensive and inclined to develop a specific disabilities culture, which had the disadvantage of separating children with disability from the rest of the community and creating the impression that their needs and problems were very different. Hence, the need of including them in educational system and in the

community became very pressing. This paved the way for the advent of the concept of integrated education in India.

#### **Move Towards Inclusion :**

Certain international agencies like Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind and Christopher Blind Mission began experimenting the integration of visually impaired children and other children. Around 1970, the success of international experiment in placing CWSN in regular schools began to be noticed. Thus, the time-honoured tradition of educating CWSN in special schools began to be questioned with the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. This gave birth to programmes/schemes on integrated education in India. The more comprehensive concept of Inclusion was enunciated in 1994 at Salamanca at a conference on education by UNESCO. The National Policy on Education (NPE-1986) also recognized the importance of integrated education and promoted special schools for severely disabled children or for those CWSN who due to some reason or the other could not make it to the regular school. The Plan of Action (POA-1992) also affirmed the role of special schools mainly to meet the needs of multiple-handicapped children. This was followed by the provision made in Persons with Disabilities (Full Participation, Equal Opportunities and Protection of Rights) Act, 1995. With inclusion came a new wave of modifying the role of special schools to promote inclusion. This role can be broadly summarized as follows:

- To develop special schools as specialist/resource centres for children whose disabilities are multiple and severe and who require additional therapy and counselling support
- To use special schools as demonstration centres for professionals and others
- To draw upon the expertise of special schools to train teachers to teach more effectively in inclusive settings to deal with pupil diversity, particularly in the context of the large class sizes

- To utilize special schools for the development of educational material that will benefit all children, including those who have physical and/or communication difficulties.

#### **New Role of Special Schools/ NGOs**

- Planning for education of CWSN
- Assisting in policy-making
- Advocacy
- Promoting inclusive education
- Referral services
- Teacher training
- Production and distribution of assistive devices
- Organizing camps
- Parents' education/ counseling
- Residential services to severe CWSN
- Development of material
- Income generation
- Vocational training
- Community-based rehabilitation
- Information centres
- Research studies
- Monitoring the impact of inclusion.

#### **NGO of Assam in Participatory Planning :**

Axom Sarba Shiksha Abhijan Mission (ASSAM) is an effort to universalize elementary education by community ownership of the school system. It stresses on bridging social, regional and gender gaps with the active participation of the community in the management of the schools. The programme places a special focus on the groups with special needs. One such category is disabled children, in and out of school. Diversity in approaches is required to deal with the educational needs of CWSN. On account of separate administrative arrangements of schools, there is also a need to coordinate and converge interventions across Departments and

local bodies responsible for elementary education for disabled children. This calls for a provision of planning in partnership with civil society groups, which already exist. Thus, State SSA Mission Society of Assam has taken up initiatives to reach out to CWSN with a special focus, in collaboration with the local NGOs. Initially after a survey, it was felt that no organization was working on integrated/inclusion education. All organizations, having expertise in special education catered, mainly to urban towns/cities. All these had their areas of specialization (visual impairment, hearing impairment, cerebral palsy and mental retardation etc). But none of them had exposure to teaching CWSN in rural classrooms, generally over-crowded and multi-graded in nature. The State SSA Mission Society with the NGO partnership strategy used the credible special education centres as resource organizations. These organizations were first given a basic orientation on IE so that they could develop necessary skills to work in this area. Involving NGOs in the programme served dual purpose of creating awareness about SSA in the community at large; and strengthening ties between the Govt. and NGOs through convergence. In the first phase, a MOU with 9 NGOs for 7 districts was signed at the State Mission Office (SMO). In the second phase, 4 NGOs were selected for 4 districts. Table 1 shows total NGOs in both first and second phase. Training on IE was conducted for 5 days after which these NGOs started work at the block level.

#### **Materials and Method :**

The district Golaghat (fig. 1) the study area, is located in the north east part of Assam, India. The total area of Golaghat district is 3502 sq. kms. and lies 100 meter above the mean sea level. It is surrounded by Brahmaputra River in north, Nagaon and Karbi Anglong districts in the west, Jorhat district and Nagaland in the east and Karbi Anglong and Nagaland in the South. Golaghat district is located longitudinally from 93°16'E to 94°10'E and latitudinally from 25°50'N to 26°47'N. It is 290 kms far from the state capital Dispur. Dhansiri, the main river originating from 'Laisang peak' of Nagaland is flowing

through a distance of 352 km from south to north before joining the Brahmaputra.

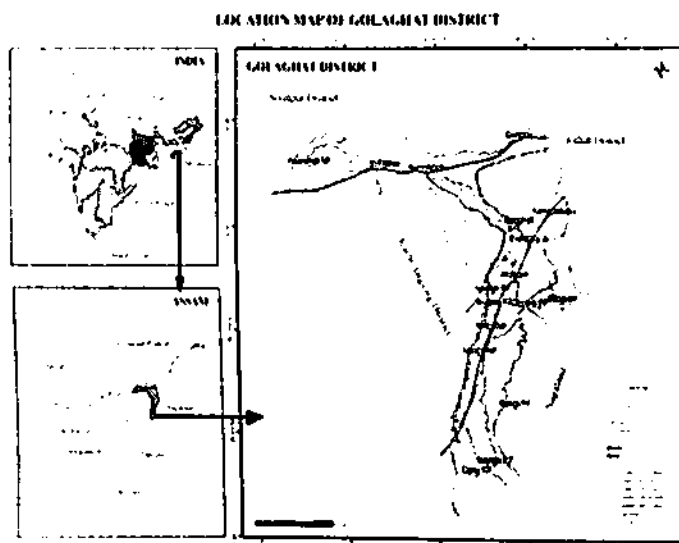


Figure 1. Location map of Golaghat district

The Primary and secondary data required for the present study have been collected by door to door survey and from office of SSA, Golaghat. The collected data are verified, compiled and examined for the preparation of the manuscript.

#### Results and discussion :

The following table shows the different NGOs of Assam involving in the teaching and learning processes of CWSN.

Table 1. NGOs Associated with SSA in Assam

Sl. No.	Name of the NGO	District	Blocks	Number of CWSN Covered
1	Assam Mental Welfare Society	Nalbari	Pub Nalbari	
2	Voluntary Health Association of Assam and Prerona, Pratibandhi Bikash Kendra	Jorhat	East and Central Titabar and Jorhat	450 750

3	Voluntary Health Association of Assam and Upper Assam Handicapped Centre	Golaghat	East and West South	1425 500
4	NER multi-purpose handicap school	Dhemaji	Dhemaji and Bordoloni	1578
5	Asha Deep	Lakhimpur	Narayanpur and Bihpuria	881
6	Mon Vikash Kendra Dristidan Asha Deep	Kamrup	Rangiya and Boko Hajo and Karara Dimoria and Rani	858 604 659
7	Mrinal Jyoti	Dibrugarh	Joypur & Tenga-khat Tengkhat	750
8	NER multi-purpose school and training centre	Sonitpur-Bishwanath-chariali	B. Chariali and Behali	857
9	Handicapped multidevelopment society	Barpeta	Barpeta and Bhawanipur	485
10	UPPER ASSAM HANDI-CAPPED CENTRE	Golaghat	North block	200
11	Sreemanta Sankar Mission	Nagaon	Khagarijan and Rupahi	1111

Each NGO was entrusted with a maximum of 2 blocks only, to begin with the following aims and objectives —

- Create awareness and sensitization of community, Village Education Committee and counselling of parents and peers on detection, identification and early intervention;
- Help placement of children in general schools;
- Impart pre-integration skills to children with moderate disability with the help of resource teacher and Anganwadi workers at ECCE/EGS centres;

- Conduct training of general teachers of primary school;
- Provide resource support to the schools and teachers through resource teachers and Gram Panchayat volunteers;
- Do preparation of IEPs and case studies;
- Network with the Department of Welfare, Health and other related institutions to provide required aids and appliances;
- Coordinate the activities of the Departments like Social Welfare, Health, Rehabilitation and other voluntary agencies working in the field;
- In case of children with severe disabilities, make necessary referrals, access to special school and other services etc; and
- Submit monthly and quarterly reports to SMO.

**Activity of Upper Assam Handicapped Centre (UAHC), Bokakhat :**

Upper Assam handicapped centre was established in Bokakhat sub-division of Golaghat on 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct., 1989 as an institution to cater to the mental, educational and health care needs of the physically handicapped persons of the area. It was formed as a Special Handicapped School on 26<sup>th</sup> January of 1994 and was registered on 16<sup>th</sup> March, 1998 under the Act of 1860 (Registration No. 2562/94). This centre provides comprehensive, diagnostic, therapeutic, educational and vocational services to differently abled children. UAHC is accommodated in 5 bighas of Govt land in ward no. 2 of Bokakhat town. Presently looking after welfare of 155 students, out of which 63 are physically challenged and 18 staff members are working dedicatively.

The following are the objectives of UAHC :

1. To undertake development of human resources for management, training, rehabilitation, education, employment and social development of persons with multiple disabilities.
2. To undertake services and outreach programmes for persons with disabilities.

UAHC provides comprehensive, diagnostic, therapeutic, educational and vocational services to the differently abled children. The services catered by UAHC, Bokakhat are as follows:

- Early Intervention
- Special care
- Special education
- Speech and hearing intervention
- Playing and music
- Vocational training: Weaving, carpentry, cane, bamboo, gardening, embroidery and tailoring, painting, flower making, toy making, jute products etc.
- Vocational guidance and counseling
- Rehabilitation of the physically challenged children
- Distribution of aids and appliances
- Sensory integration
- Occupational therapy (part time)
- Physio therapy (part time)
- Medical intervention (per month by Vivekananda hospital, NRL)
- Psychological intervention (part time)
- Arrangement of Special Olympic: 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2011.

A few students passed out from the centre absorbed as teacher in the same school after taking higher degrees. Among them Mato Bori (BA) recruit as teacher in the same institute whereas Pali Tamuli (BA), Junmoni Bora (Blind, HS Passed), Hidoya Saikia are employed as Hostel Super. Teacher and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade employee respectively at UAHC, Bokakhat.

The following table shows the year wise distribution of total students appeared in HSLC and total passed from 2005 to 2015.

**Table 2.** Distribution of HSLC students appeared from UAHC, Bokakhat

Year	Total students appeared	Student passed	Pass %
2005	06	01	16.66
2006	05	01	20.0
2007	06	02	33.33
2008	04	02	50.0
2009	14	03	21.42
2010	06	02	33.33
2011	13 (2 Nos 100% disabled)	04	30.76
2012	20	0	0.0
2013	14	02	14.28
2014	16	06	37.5
2015	15	05	33.33

**Conclusion :**

Assam's experience with the NGOs was an experience of learning. It was observed that while some NGOs grasped the concept of inclusion, there were still others that took time to understand the principles of inclusion and put them into practice. Some of the NGOs also had initial problems of record keeping, maintaining the case studies of CWSN and lack of coordination. However, on the whole, the performance of the NGOs was satisfactory, as it opened new doors of convergence between the govt. and the voluntary sector. It was generally felt that any SSA State Mission Society, that used NGOs for inclusive education, had to undertake intensive supervision and monitoring to review the activities conducted at the field level. In this regard the Upper Assam Handicapped Centre, Bokakhat plays an important role in the field of comprehensive, diagnostic, therapeutic, educational and vocational services to differently abled children. More capacity building exercises of the field level functionaries were also

necessary, especially on data related aspects and, in particular, on issues related to school quality and classroom transaction.

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# Issues, Government Policies on Inclusive Education

■ **Debjani Goswami**

## ABSTRACT

*The value of inclusive education in a diverse society comprised of children with disabilities is not worth debating. It is definitely a much needed tool to be utilised to channelize the invaluable resources of the children who are partially or fully disabled in some way or the other. Government initiatives like Rehabilitation Council of India Act (1992) which states that CWSN will be taught by a trained teacher, Persons with Disabilities Act (1995) highlighting the educational entitlement for all CWSN up to 18 years in an appropriate environment, the National Trust Act (1999) which states providing services and support to severely disabled children and the 86<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment (2007) mandating free and compulsory education to children, up to 14 years helped shape the comprehensive National Action Plan for Inclusion in Education of the Children and Persons with Disabilities (MHRD, 2005), and the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities in 2006 (an MSJE initiative). This paper aims to portray a collective picture of the steps undertaken by the government and the crucial impediments to it.*

**Key Words:** *Inclusive education, Government policies, Crucial impediments*

## Introduction :

Inclusive education is a tool to address the learning needs of children with special needs, with a particular focus on those who are subject to being isolated and excluded. The basic idea behind inclusive education is to promote opportunities for all children to participate, learn and have equal treatment, irrespective of their mental or physical abilities. The Government of India has created numerous policies around special education since the country's independence in 1947. Although the Government of India has attempted to create policies that are inclusive for people with disabilities, their implementation efforts have not resulted in an inclusive system of education, nor have they reached their goal of "education for all" across the country. The Government of India needs to bridge the gaps in their education system to build a strong system of inclusive education in India. While the awareness on inclusive education in schools throughout the country is still at an infancy stage, educational institutions are somewhat sceptical about having both normal and special children studying in the same classroom. And in circumstances, where a former excluded child is given admission into a mainstream classroom, the outcome of the action is questionable. To be precise, lack of flexibility in curriculum, inability to fend for themselves and thus being bullied by others in the class and not getting adequate attention from the teacher are common issues faced in an attempt to regulate the inclusive system of imparting education. All these may subsequently result in the child not getting a fair inclusive education. As a result, the number of children with special needs receiving higher education is on constant decline.

## The hindrances/issues :

### 1. Change in curriculum :

Change in curriculum and style of imparting education is an important ingredient or step towards the realisation of the actual goals of inclusive education. The traditional method of imparting education is effective to some extent but exclusively designed for students without disabilities. The conventional method of imparting education



is not designed to accommodate children with varying degrees and types of disabilities. This in turn leads to the creation of a segregated class of individuals with a very artificial and unnatural upbringing as the socialisation process is altered to best suit their psychological and physical disabilities. On the other side of the argument the prestigious institutions are reluctant to cater to the needs of such students mostly due to the fear of the overall annual result of the institute and also the impact of the amalgamation of the students with some form of disability with the students without any such condition. Another issue regarding the curriculum would be the fashion of imparting education would clearly require a reformation. This painstaking task is hardly carried out by any institute due to the complex nature of this reformation and the ambiguity of outcome.

## **2. Social strata and education:**

Amartya Sen coined the term "conversion handicap", implying a situation when people with disabilities derive a lower level of welfare from a given level of income than the rest of the population, due to additional costs incurred in converting income into well-being, which often relates to the Indian context of services provided by the government and the beneficiaries taking advantage of such facilities at the ground level. The extreme levels of poverty that many people in India live in put India in the category of a "developing country." The social structure of a "developed" country is very different than India's, as a "developing" country. Developed countries tend to have an ideological commitment to equal opportunity, with the money to back their commitment. However, the complicated structure of Indian society seeped in years of religion and history is not as conducive to social change. Hinduism, which 80% of India's population practices, creates a social structure in Indian society which is very different from that of every single country in the world. The caste system of the religion has been distorted, and as a result, India has multiple hierarchical concerns around caste built into society. Couple dalits, the "untouchable" caste, with other marginalized groups in India - females,

the poor, children, the elderly, migrants, people living with HIV/AIDS and the complicated hierarchical structure of Indian society emerges. In the midst of all these synthetic and temporary social stratification the government initiatives are having a tough time penetrating to the lowest of this artificial social stratification. Due to this, decades of inclusive policy are not aligning with the realities on the ground. India is experiencing policy implementation problems, and as a result, policies which should produce an inclusive system of education for people of all ability levels are only resulting in fragments of inclusion scattered across the country.

## **3. Marginalize Groups and People with Disabilities :**

There are several areas across which people with disabilities receive unequal services in India. The difference between urban and rural areas and the services available in both is one of them. An overwhelming majority - 75% of people with disabilities live in rural areas in India. The number becomes worrisome in comparison to where the majority of services are offered; which is in urban areas. Less than 15% of national services for people with disabilities are located in rural areas, and of those, most are expensive and/or private. The discrepancy in services is directly reflected in educational achievement and enrolment in schools. The National Census, states, in terms of educational levels, only 11% of children with disabilities between the ages of 5-18 years in urban areas (less than 1% in rural areas) were enrolled in special schools, while 55% of adults with disabilities were illiterate (59% in rural and 40% in urban areas), with only 7% in rural and 18% in urban areas having completed secondary education. Most of the data available follows this trend, suggesting that services are significantly more available in urban areas and people and students with disabilities are more marginalized in rural areas. However, interestingly, in the National Census, the data is the opposite in regards to inclusive schooling, or at least attending a mainstream school. Per 1000 students with a disability between the ages of 5-18, enrolment years in mainstream schools were actually higher in rural areas versus

urban areas: 475 out of 1000 students with disabilities attended a mainstream school in rural areas, versus 444 out of 1000 students with disabilities in urban areas. This may be because there is a higher prevalence of special schools in urban areas, which would make sense considering that urban areas have significantly more resources. Another area of inequity between persons with disabilities is gender. The Government of India National Census pointed out the extreme inequities between girls and boys with a disability. In number, there are fewer girls than boys with a disability. Due to abortion, female infanticide and feticide of female children girls are less disabled. Females with a disability are not considered an educational investment becomes they marry into a husband's family. But boys stay and provide for their own families all their life. So 68% of disabled girls are not in school. Girls with disabilities have a lower rate of enrolment in school than boys across many sectors - urban vs rural, by type of schooling, by level of schooling, and in primary versus secondary schooling. According to World Bank in general, school attendance is never more than 70% for boys and 66% for girls. Family also wrong about their girls with a disability that if they do not go to school the family will be able to look after them closely. But women and girls in general, due to socio-cultural and political-economic factors become, "one of the most marginalized groups in society."

The National Census did not break down types of disability. According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV (DSM IV) or a similar text, but rather, by the categories "locomotors, multiple, mental retardation (Intellectual disability), mental illness, blindness, low vision, hearing and speech disability. Out of 70-110 million of disabled people, 53% have a locomotor disability, 13% have a visual disability, 10 % have an auditory disability and 4% have an intellectual disability. Intellectually disabled people are discriminated against people with physical disabilities. People with Intellectual disabilities - (Mental Retardation) had the four times less enrolment rates in schools than children with physical disabilities. They are least likely to get married. Due to intellectual disabilities, less service are

available, partly because educators have to make changes to the curriculum to accommodate these students, whereas students with physical or locomotors disabilities are often able to learn the same material as students without disabilities. Again due to social stigma, parents are more likely to keep their children with intellectual disabilities at home, hiding these family members. So almost 3-fourths of people with 'Severe' disabilities are illiterate. However, various gaps in the education system which are preventing children with a disability from being in school.

#### 4. Gaps in the education system in India :

We have seen progress in Governmental policies that point towards efforts of inclusion of mainstream education in India but the current statistics and literature point to a different situation on the ground. A study was presented at a seminar called integrated education for children with special needs, a matter of social justice and human rights" in Delhi, 1997. There were many reasons identified, why students dropped out of main stream schools in India. Students repeatedly failed their courses were asked to leave by teachers and many of them teased for their failure. Many students said, the teacher at their old school would erase lessons off of the board before they finished to copy them. Other students said they were not promoted beyond nursery classes and found it embarrassing to be in lower classes with children younger than them. All of these reasons point to deficiencies not in the students but in the lack of accommodation, inclusive teachers are not trained in inclusive teaching which directly reflected in the achievement of the student. Most policy makers, planners have heard of inclusion, but they do not know about the specific, technicalities of provisions in their own country.

There should be one ministry which is responsible for training of all teachers in inclusive education. Since the Rehabilitation Council of Indian Act. of 1992 which set standards for teacher training. Recently another system done in the 1980s under the project Integrated Education for the Disabled. Researchers found that about 45% of

children with "mild" disabilities can be taught in a mainstream classroom by teachers with one week of training about inclusion. 30% of children with 'mild to moderate' disabilities can be taught by teachers having training on inclusion for 1-2 weeks, plus periodic counselling. 15% of children with "moderate to severe" disabilities can be taught in an inclusive setting with teacher who have about three months of training. These students also need "resource assistance" including corrective aids and periodicals in different formats. 10% of children with 'severe' disabilities who require special teachers or one-on one aids. In India, there are two main types of curriculum- plus curriculum (specifically designed for children with disabilities) and general curriculum. Inflexible syllabi in fiercely competitive examination oriented system, with high pressure on both students and teachers. India has extremely rigid assessments and examinations. Although some alternative mediums of testing are available to accommodate students with disabilities "adaptations of tools, medium and methodology of assessment are all grey areas. "School buildings are not accessible to people with disabilities, only 18% of SSA schools were "barrier free" and the numbers were even lower in same states, 2%, in Jammu and Kashmir, and 6% in Bihar. Fund is another gap in the system. In 1979 there was a 50-50 funding split in funding for public education between the state and central Government. But programmes do not run parallel between states and the Central Government due to multiple parties involved. The Department of Education within the Ministry of Human Resource Development is in charge of all mainstream schooling, while the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is in charge of special schools, through grants to nonprofits and NGOs. In the past, NGOs has been running special school for children with disabilities. NGOs and special schools have begun to take on attentive responsibilities. Former special schools have become resource centres for the students who require resources room. They have also been made into demonstration and training centres to teach mainstream teachers about inclusion and working with students with disabilities. At present, the number of NGO's that exist is very small in comparison to needs. NGOs

could make a large impact on the transformation of the education system into one that is inclusive

### **Conclusion:**

In India, a majority of children with special needs do not receive any formal education, in spite of the practice of inclusive education in some schools. This is because of children with disabilities and learning deficiencies are segregated from mainstream schools and other regular routines and social activities of normal children. Other contributing factors to this situation are lack of affordability and awareness on the kind of education options available to children with special needs.

The feasibility of inclusive education requires certain conditions, which includes institutes having a balanced curriculum that is appropriate for all categories of children, teachers who have the ability to handle the individual needs within the classroom and thereby promote an environment where personal development, social skills and student participation are strongly encouraged.

Another critical aspect of inclusive education for a special need child is in having the acceptance and friendship of classmates. This kind of support also aids in the progress of special children and helps them to gain confidence within the school environment. Further, parents have a vital role as partners to make inclusive education successful within the classroom. This is possible when the children with special needs continue to live at home and attend school, just like normal children. Parents should also be involved with the teachers and administrative staff at the school to coordinate travel arrangements, school activities and learning materials for their special child. Out of all of these special gaps in the education system, the most important one to change is the negative paradigm around people with disabilities. A paradigm shift is beginning in India, at least among the policy makers, that "education for all" will not be achieved without a completely inclusive education system. Hopefully, the rest of the country will follow in this direction.

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## **Role of Media towards Inclusive Education**

■ **Dr. Bala Lakhendra** ■ **Bhupali Kashyap**

### **ABSTRACT**

*The main aim of this paper is to discuss about the importance of media in inclusive education in North East India. The primary objectives of media are to inform, educate and entertain the largest possible audience. In the process of information, education and entertainment media can concentrate on particular issue related inclusive Education. The scale of the problem with regard to inclusive education is huge, and the resources are inadequate. The deprivation caused by these factors is compounded by the long history of caste hatred and the socially divisive legacy of colonialism. It is not surprising, then, that the nation has to surpass its own great achievements over the last quarter century and continue in future the process of discovering for itself the challenges in defining denial and capturing nuances of marginalisation. These nuances often go unnoticed when a simple matrix of class and caste is employed to describe Indian society which is fragmented over two thousand castes, six hundred tribes and more than a thousand mother tongues. The media has been setting for the nation its social, political economic and even cultural agenda. With the advent of satellite channels its impact is even sharper and deeper. Media can play a very important and significant role in imparting quality education in India particularly in North East India. Today, throughout the world, social and technological changes are taking place rapidly due to*

*expanding world of information. So there is explosion of knowledge. New frontiers of knowledge are opening day by day and the horizon of human knowledge and understanding is expanding very fast. Education of tomorrow will be able to play its role more effectively by making the individuals creative, active and efficient. Success of education cannot be achieved merely by substituting mechanical methods for human beings, but by developing new patterns using both human beings and technological advancements in order to teach more people better and more rapidly. With regard to North East India good number of media for mass communication such as Radio, Television, Newspapers and Films etc. are there to give proper direction to the inclusive education in North East India.*

**Key Words - Inclusive Education, Media, Development.**

#### **Introduction :**

As per definition of UNICEF, inclusive education means that all students attend and are welcomed by their neighbourhood schools in age-appropriate, regular classes and are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the life of the school.

Inclusion in education describes an approach wherein students with special educational needs spend most or all of their time with non-disabled students. Inclusion was once thought only necessary for educating students with special educational needs until dual certification of special educators as school teacher leaders. Now it is crucial that all of teachers ensure inclusive practice for all students in their classroom and the wider school. Implementation of inclusion practice varies and schools most frequently use the strategy for select students with mild to severe special needs.

Inclusion has different historical roots which may be integration of students with severe disabilities in the US (who may previously been excluded from schools or even lived in institutions) or an inclusion model from Canada and the US (e.g., Syracuse University, New York)

which is very popular with inclusion teachers who believe in participatory learning, cooperative learning, and inclusive classrooms.

Inclusive education differs from the early university professor's work (e.g., 1970s, Education Professor Carol Berrigan of Syracuse University, 1985; Douglas Biklen, Dean of School of Education through 2011) in integration and mainstreaming which were taught throughout the world including in international seminars in Italy. Mainstreaming (e.g., the Human Policy Press poster; If you thought the wheel was a good idea, you'll like the ramp) tended to be concerned about "readiness" of all parties for the new coming together of students with significant needs. Thus, integration and mainstreaming principally was concerned about disability and 'special educational needs' (since the children were not in the regular schools) and involved teachers, students, principals, administrators, School Boards, and parents changing and becoming 'ready for' students who needed accommodation or new methods of curriculum and instruction (e.g., required federal IEPs - individualized education program) by the mainstream.

By contrast, inclusion is about the child's right to participate and the school's duty to accept the child returning to the US Supreme Court's *Brown vs. the Board of Education* decision and the new Individuals with Disabilities Education (Improvement) Act (IDEIA). Inclusion rejects the use of special schools or classrooms, which remain popular among large multi-service providers, to separate students with disabilities from students without disabilities. A premium is placed upon full participation by students with disabilities, in contrast to earlier concept of partial participation in the mainstream, and upon respect for their social, civil, and educational rights. Inclusion gives students with disabilities skills they can use in and out of the classroom.

#### **Education Scenario of India :**

Education in India is provided by the public sector as well as the private sector, with control and funding coming from three levels: central, state, and local. Under various articles of the Indian

Constitution, free and compulsory education is provided as a fundamental right to children between the ages of 6 and 14. The ratio of public schools to private schools in India is 7:5.

India has made progress in terms of increasing the primary education attendance rate and expanding literacy to approximately three-quarters of the population in the 7-10 age group, by 2011. India's improved education system is often cited as one of the main contributors to its economic development. Much of the progress, especially in higher education and scientific research, has been credited to various public institutions.

At the primary and secondary level, India has a large private school system complementing the government run schools, with 29% of students receiving private education in the 6 to 14 age group. Certain post-secondary technical schools are also private. The private education market in India had revenue of US\$450 million in 2008, but is projected to be a US\$40 billion market.

As per the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2012, 96.5% of all rural children between the ages of 6-14 were enrolled in school. This is the fourth annual survey to report enrolment above 96%. Another report from 2013 stated that there were 229 million students enrolled in different accredited urban and rural schools of India, from Class I to XII, representing an increase of 2.3 million students over 2002 total enrolment, and a 19% increase in girl's enrolment. While quantitatively India is inching closer to universal education, the quality of its education has been questioned particularly in its government run school system. Some of the reasons for the poor quality include absence of around 25 percent of teachers every day. States of India have introduced tests and education assessment system to identify and improve such schools.

It is important to clarify that while there are private schools in India, they are highly regulated in terms of what they can teach, in what form they can operate (must be a non-profit to run any accredited educational institution) and all other aspects of operation. Hence, the differentiation of government schools and private schools can be

misguiding.

In India's education system, a significant number of seats are reserved under affirmative action policies for the historically disadvantaged Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes. In universities, colleges, and similar institutions affiliated to the federal government, there are a minimum 50% of reservations applicable to these disadvantaged groups, at the state level it can vary. Maharashtra had 73% reservation in 2014, which is the highest percentage of reservations in India.

#### **Information is Power :**

'Communication is not only a system of information, but also an integral part of education and development' - (McBride Commission Report, 1978). Information is power - because it can enrich, empower and help to achieve a better and improvised life at a personal. This ultimately leads into empowerment in the true sense of the term. But the problem is how to make these information available to the mass - right from the highly-educated ones to the illiterates and also those identified as living below poverty line. At present literacy rate in India is 74.85 % (India Census 2011) in the 66th year of Independence. But the government definition of a literate person is that someone who can just sign his or her name. So the actual number of proper literates will be far lesser than this percentage. In this direction mass media can be a highly potential tool for achieving the ambitious goal of mass literacy for the society's benefit. This is because mass media is an informal university opens for everyone - the highly-educated to the illiterate, from the rich to the poor alike. Its enormous reach and prowess has not parallel in the world in influencing the masses audience in the desired manner. For gender equity equal access to the different sources of information is must. Communication is regarded as a two-way process of exchanging or shaping ideas, feeling and information. Broadly it refers to the countless ways that humans have of keeping in touch with one another. Communication is more than mere exchange of information. It is a process necessary to pave way for desired

changes in human behaviour, and informed individual and community participation to achieve predetermined goals. Communication is part of our normal relationship with other people. Ability to influence others depends on different communication skills, e.g. speaking, writing, listening reading and reasoning. The developing countries are now beginning to exploit the current communication revolution to put developmental information at the disposal of communities, to help people to achieve all round development. It is said that without communication an individual could never become a human being, without mass communication, one could never become a part of developing society. It is, therefore, imperative that adequate resources of funding, expertise and planning be invested for integration of the Community Radio so as to exploit the immense opportunities offered by information and communication technologies in reaching audiences hitherto disconnected with the mainstream media or so far unreachable. In the present scenario Community Radio are poised to play an ever increasing role as an engine of development, and can provide reliable and simple means delivering of social and developmental communication, conveying rich media information and entertainment to audiences where little or none is available.

#### **Importance of Mass Media :**

Mass Media provide information to the mass within a less time. It takes a wide coverage of information regarding anything that is happening in any corner of the world. It brings the entire world to the individual or to the classroom. Children spend hours together sitting in front of the television and can visualize, hear and acquire knowledge about the world. These media easily reach groups, allow repeated use, give more reality, influence attitudes, show cause and effect relationships and ultimately motivate the audience. It sends information to remote places and helps in distant learning. It helps in modification of attitudes, inculcation of desirable values and acquaintance with cultural heritage. Mass media acts as an agency of social change. Mass media are useful for reinforcing group

dynamics and interpersonal communication. Mass media as means of communication make ideas clear to children and help them to acquire correct knowledge. They help in simplifying and in giving vividness to explanation. Mass Media make the instruction concrete and stimulate interest and excite curiosity in things.

“Education today, therefore, has a far greater responsibility than it had ever before. It has to meet the demands of a dynamic world which change its character every day. Contemporary education has to be more comprehensive and complete than it was ever before. The role of the various agencies of education like home, society, community etc. has consequently increased, so has the role of the mass media like television, radio, cinema, newspaper increased.” So now-a-day, press, radio, cinema, television, etc. are becoming more and more important in an individual's life.

Mass media in education are press, radio, motion-picture, television, etc. So mass media are many and these are technically called passive agencies of education. They influence the attitude and behaviour of the people indirectly. These agencies cover entertainment, informatory propaganda, historical record, education and improvement of moral judgement and moral tone of the people.

#### **Broadcasting is power :**

‘Broadcasting is power’, Mahatma Gandhi said in 1948, as this great personality well understood the immense potential of radio as a mass medium even more than six long decades ago. In the informal sector, radio can take up the responsibility quite easily. AIR being a good example of a Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) needs to gear up its ‘public education’ component for this purpose. We are pushing the cause of radio more than the others because being an audio- medium, it offers far more scope for utilizing itself for the purpose.

Radio has played a very vital role in rural development. Radio provided rural folk with information and entertainment that were needed by them in their day to day lives. Farmers got news about weather, crop rotation, fertilizers, irrigation, harvesting etc. The rural women

got the information about inoculation of children, women's health, hygiene, diseases and control thereof, new appliances, etc. Thus, the rural masses developed their basic knowledge sets due to inputs provided by Radio. Radio was used in the past to study the efficacy of various programmes started by the government. Political thinkers, teachers, researchers, rural and urban youth listen radio programmes to develop themselves. It is also a very important source of entertainment. Every day, we listen various talks, discussions and debates from radio. These are extremely important and useful for the students. Especially for the purpose of teaching, many programmes are broadcast over the radio. So radio acts as a great recreational and education force. It broadcasts scientific and cultural facts. It enlightens public opinion. It stimulates curiosity and interests.

The radio has proved a valuable supplement to class teaching and learning. Educational broad-casting is comparatively a new experiment and is catching on well. Through school broadcasts, expert teaching in such diverse fields of science, social studies, art, music, languages, politics, current affairs and other areas, can provide information and enrichment for pupils and for the teacher.

The educational programmes are broadcasting by the expert teachers with effective methods which demonstrate new ideas and approaches to classroom procedures.

#### **Educational radio broadcasts and its Importance :**

In radio the emphasis is on sound, rather than on picture. So many programmes especially for the purpose of teaching are broadcast over the radio and special events and (occurrences in the world are brought from the source immediately into the classroom). As a part of classroom teaching, an educational programme may be preceded by an introduction by the class teacher and followed by long discussion among students on the subject-matter under the broadcast discussion. A talented teacher may teach through radio for the benefit of the students. So important happenings, elections, inventions, political developments in other countries and other current topics may be heard

and discussed in the classroom.

Since learning directly from the teacher is minimal and there is increasing stress on a system of open learning to overcome the rigidities of formal education, and there is more emphasis on learning through various mass media. Educational radio broadcasts are expected to play an important role towards a system of open learning. The non-formal approaches of educational radio can supplement the movement for de-schooling society. All the programmes lead towards a learning society where everybody can learn at any time at any place.

Radio is, at present, not only one of the popular mass media, but also a potential instructional tool in the formal, informal and non-formal education. It is now giving more emphasis on the planning and production of science programmes in both the formal and no-formal spheres of educational broadcasts. There are also special programmes for teachers and teacher-education in most of the stations. These are intended to familiarize methods of teaching. This service has been more necessitated in recent years on account of large changes in school curriculum and methodology particularly in subjects like science, mathematics, social studies and English. The radio with its vast resources can organize a series of programmes in order to bring universalization of primary education and promote adult literacy. The programmes are being related to their education, health, hygiene, nutrition etc. with a thrust on bringing the audience into the mainstream of national life.

So, radio is an effective medium. It has occupied a significant place in communication. It is also playing an important role in education. It not only informs, but also inspires. It not only inculcates values and virtues, but also creates attitudes, interests and appreciation.

#### **Television as Mass Media :**

Today, television has become an extremely popular source of entertainment among youngsters. We listen and see the instruction of the speaker from the television. So the whole personality of the child



is engaged in the task. Hence, it has become the most important and powerful agency of mass communication. In television, news items are not only read out but the events are shown. As a result of which not only problems are discussed but practical remedies and solutions are also suggested.

So, educational television is the most recent audio-visual media for class instruction. There are programmes on the television especially for the school children. These programmes are aimed at educating the school children and they instill good moral values. Television can give a very good idea of the history of the country through dances, short-films on historical places, museums etc. Thus television plays a vital role as a means of mass media in educating the masses.

#### **Advantages of Educational Television :**

The advantages of educational television are many. The young people watching the television can get a very good idea of how it really happened. For example the nuclear explosions of the launching of rockets are programmes of extreme educational value.

Educational television is capable of making available many needed and so far inaccessible learning experiences. Educational television brings about continuing co-operative planning by teachers, supervisors, learning materials experts and skilful production teams. Good and effective educational television broadcasts result from the outgrowth of curriculum planning, of content analysis and of the selection of this most appropriate instructional media. It can use a variety of audio-visual aids, motion pictures, film-strips, slides, recordings, drawings, maps and other projected and non-projected aids can be demonstrated through Television. Video-tapes and recordings on television bring us the launching of space rockets, of political and social events.

Educational television brings us a new kind of teaching team into existence. It can acquaint the children with past culture, history and social life. It can motivate both children and adults, because not only it is educative but also entertaining. The televised-lectures are

more thrilling as they bring to the listeners not only verbal information and the instruction of the speaker but also the whole of his personality engaged in the task. National problems like those of population and poverty and illiteracy are often highlighted and discussed over the television. It plays an important role to play in educating the children on the history and culture of our country. It gives a very good idea of the history of the country by telecasting various programmes through dances, short films on historical places, museums etc. Thus television plays a very vital part, as a means of mass media in educating the masses. It is a dynamic and powerful medium which influence education. Its effective use is based upon the fundamental psychological principles of learning which apply to all successful processes of learning.

#### **Development of Educational Television Experiment in India :**

The development of educational television in India can be traced back to the General Conference of UNESCO held in New-Delhi in 1956. Thus the experimental television service was started with the objectives of "experimentation, training and evaluation" as a part of the UNESCO Project. During 1960-61 a series of social education programmes were telecast in collaboration with UNESCO. The nature as well as impact of these programmes was evaluated by the National Fundamental Education Centre and Indian Adult Education Association, New-Delhi. Regular T.V. Service was inaugurated in Delhi on the 15th August, 1965. It was a landmark in the history of television with launching of the "KrishiDarshan" programme for farmers. One grand project on television was undertaken and accordingly some T.V. Sets were installed in secondary schools by 1985. After execution of this project, this was also evaluated. The experiments of all these projects were significantly beneficial, enlightening and interesting.

Day-by-day the use of educational television increased at a rapid rate and tremendous progress has been made in use of educational television in India after 1982. As the number of schools equipped with T.V. sets increase, benefit of E.T.V. programmes were extended to number

of students in different subjects like Physics, Chemistry, Hindi, English, Geography and current affairs. The famous Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) was implemented during 1975-76. This was inaugurated by Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India at Ahmedabad on the 1st August, 1975. The T.V. Programmes could be telecast with the help of a satellite called ATS-F loaned by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, USA. The T.V. programmes were related to Education, Agriculture, Health, Family Planning, National Integration and so on. Rural population was selected as the target audience for this project. In Orissa the scheme was implemented in three districts-Dhenkanal, Sambalpur and Phulbani. Besides Orissa, the project was undertaken in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The scheme was effective in educating the rural people.

#### **INSAT Projects and Development in Education :**

After successful implementation of SITE in 1975-76 in India by NASA, USA; India decided to have a Satellite of her own. With a view to utilizing the INSAT capability for educational development, the Ministry of Education initiated action for preparing plans of operation as early as in July 1979. So a meeting was convened by the Ministry of Education on the 30th January, 1980 to discuss the background paper and all connected issues involved in the satellite utilisation for radio and television programmes.

The Ministry of Education, Government of India, in collaboration with UNESCO, convened National Workshop on Educational Broadcasting from December 1 to 6, 1980 at New Delhi. The workshop assumed special significance on account of the Nation's renewed emphasis on Educational Broadcasting on the eve of putting INSAT in the orbit. So the first Indian Satellite, INSAT-IA was launched on 10 April, 1982. The second satellite INSAT-IB was launched on 30 August 1983 with modified advanced technical equipment's for the use of educational broadcasts through television. The Central Institute of Educational Technology under the NCERT at New Delhi, is mainly

concerned with the development of innovations and with using various media in school education. It is engaged in the development of an attractive system of education using television through INSAT to reach in and out of school children and teachers in rural areas. It produces E.T.V. programmes and these programmes are being telecast via INSAT. State Institute of Educational Technology (SBET) has been set up in six states such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh in order to implement the INSAT for education project effectively.

Orissa is one of the six states to avail itself the T.V. Services through INSAT. Now-a-days, more emphasis is given to the production of ETV programmes for the children in the age group 5-8 and 9-11 years and teachers of primary schools. The ETV programmes of Orissa are being telecast for 45 minutes starting from 10.30 a.m. to 11.15a.m. with 5 minutes for change over.

There are Advisory Committees, one at the state level for the entire INSAT project and another for E.T.V programmes through the INSAT. At present more districts like Cuttack, Puri and Balsasore are being included in the scheme. In the INSAT states (Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, U.P, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Orissa), Education T.V. Programmes are telecast for five day in a week for 45 minutes per day. This is done with the school hours. A recent study carried out in Orissa by the CIET has brought out that only in 15% of the cases; there has been successful utilisation of the equipment. The six INSAT states were expected to create State Institutes of Educational Technology (SET) to function autonomously. So far, only Orissa has taken a decision on the creation of this Institute. As a result, a building for SIET has been constructed at Bhubaneswar. At present E.T.V programmes are being telecast via INSAT-ID since 1990 after the expiry of INSAT -IB and the failure of INS AT-IC. The INSAT is a challenging National project and its experiments inter alia, will provide new light and insight into the viewing problems and conditions of the rural audience deprived of modern sophisticated media.

**Importance of Press :**

The Press covers the entire printed matter. These printed matters are books, magazines, journals or newspapers. Reading matter has vast potentialities. It exerts good influence on the individuals. It acts on the intelligence and emotions of the individuals in shaping out attitudes and philosophies of life.

An educated individual one who has an open mind, a general awareness and knowledge of the world around him. His field of knowledge is vast and varied. Newspapers contribute very largely in education for the above end. Press not only gathers events, they also present their own views on issues. So the reader gets an opportunity to consider an issue from many angles. Press also contributes to the study of History, Geography, Science, Literature etc. The knowledge is supplemented to these subjects by the newspapers. It is possible to link certain topics with everyday life by means of the press through newspapers and other journals. The child must be aware of what is happening in the world around him.

So the press is an important service that can render to education by imparting knowledge of current affairs to children. News regarding earthquakes, cyclones, new planets and political changes may be brought to the notice of the pupils by the press. It also gives a great deal of historical information. The pupil's limited knowledge of history may be elaborated and enhanced by this press. So the press is to serve as one of the important medium of education and instruction.

**Motion Pictures :**

The motion pictures exercise a great influence on human mind very skilfully. They help to create lasting values in the pupils. There is also wider use of films in education. Educational films are coming into the field to meet the challenge of commercial pictures, to supplement them and to explore new avenues of educating children and adults. These films can give more reality, influence attitudes, show cause and effect relation and motivate the students., Thus these motion pictures have great instructional force which can be used intelligently in the

class-room.

There are many areas of learning which can be properly dealt with the help of films. For example, in teaching of geography or science, we can use these motion-pictures. Rivers of India, climate of India etc. can also be taught effectively with the help of the motion pictures.

**Advantages of Motion Pictures :**

- The educational films make the concept more clear, durable and realistic.
- Motion pictures arouse interest in children and satisfy their emotions.
- They can present abstract and abstruse problems of life and nature in concrete reality, illuminate the hidden meanings of events and mysteries of nature, reconstruct history in a short mirror of life.
- Motion pictures bring the past, the distant to the class room. It can bring the whole world to the classroom.
- Events which occur over-days can be made to appear in seconds. So Motion pictures can also be replayed many number of times when and where required.
- Motion pictures can best be used for demonstration of skills and experiments.
- Motion pictures can serve the purpose better, if they are made for specific age and ability groups, if they can be fitted into the school syllabus, if the commentary is simple and straight forward.
- Motion pictures can be of great service in teaching the backward children, because they do act on the imagination of children.

**Conclusion :**

Mass media have proved to help in classifying concepts, stimulating group and individual activities, developing a collective critical awareness, changing attitudes, imposing a new structure or

organisation on certain subjects and encouraging originality and creativeness. Therefore, teachers have to be properly motivated and made interested in the use of such materials. And they have also to be trained and oriented in the adequate use and maintenance of the materials. As we know, good teachers are not born, they are made. Training in the methods, techniques, use of various means and media help a teacher to be good and efficient. All illustrative materials will be "aids" to his teaching. His educational outputs will be optimized through judicious uses of modern methods, techniques, means and mass media. Educational research has also proved that instruction can be greatly improved through the wise selection and utilization of modern media of communication. Today, education plays a vital role. It has to meet the demands of a dynamic world. The role of the various agencies of education has consequently increased. Thus the role of mass media as passive agencies of education is highly recognised.

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# **Opinion of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University regarding Inclusive Education**

■ **Dr. Asomi Chaliha**      ■ **Rajen Mandal**

## **ABSTRACT**

*Inclusive education refers to the educational practices where children with and without disabilities participate and learn together in the same classroom or same educational institution. Inclusive education is relatively a new concept because for a long time, children with disabilities were educated in separate classes or in separate schools. People got used to the idea that children with disabilities require separate education. But now it is realized that children with disabilities can also be educated together. It helps in positive academic and social outcomes. Inclusive education is based on the simple principle that every child and family is valued equally and deserves the same opportunities and experiences. It is education for the children with disabilities - whether the disability is mild or severe, hidden or obvious. It's about building friendships, membership, relationships and having opportunities just like everyone else. It helps the children to learn and participate in academic and co-curricular activities in meaningful ways. The objectives of inclusive education cannot be achieved without awareness and correct understanding of the theme. Therefore, people of the society who are involve in the educational system must have right knowledge about it so that the fruits of inclusive education can be utilized in right direction. Post-*

*Graduate students are the future citizens and accountable to the society and must be able to carry right connotation of inclusive education so that the masses and future generation can get its advantages. Therefore, it is necessary to study their level of opinion and awareness regarding inclusive education, which will enable them to realize the meaning and importance of inclusive education for sustainable development and better world. In this background, the present study was conducted seeking opinions of Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University regarding inclusive education.*

**Key words :** *Inclusive education, Opinion, P.G. Students.*

## **Introduction :**

Inclusion is an educational approach and philosophy that offers all students with community membership and greater opportunities for academic and social achievement. In simple words, inclusive education refers to the educational practices where children with and without disabilities participate and learn together in the same classroom or same educational institution. Inclusive education is relatively a new concept because for a long time, children with disabilities were educated in separate classes or in separate schools. People got used to the idea that children with disabilities require separate education. But now it is realized that children with disabilities can also be educated together. Inclusion is about making confident that each and every student feels welcome and that their unique needs and learning styles are attended to and valued.

Inclusive education brings all students together in one classroom and community, without consideration of their strengths or weaknesses in any area, and seeks to maximize the potential and creativity of all students. Inclusion is an attempt to make sure that diverse learners – those with disabilities, different languages and cultures, different homes and family lives, different interests and ways of learning – are exposed to learning environment and teaching strategies that reach them as individual learners. Inclusive educational



institutions ask teachers to provide appropriate individualized supports and services to all students without the stigmatization that comes with separation.

#### **Significance of the Study :**

Inclusive education is about building friendships, membership, relationships and having opportunities just like everyone else. It helps the children to learn and participate in academic and co-curricular activities in meaningful ways. It helps in positive academic and social outcomes. Inclusive education is based on the simple principle that every child and family is valued equally and deserves the same opportunities and experiences. It is education for the children with disabilities – whether the disability is mild or severe, hidden or obvious. In inclusive classrooms, children with and without disabilities are expected to learn to read, write and do mathematics. Here, with higher expectations and good instruction children with disabilities learn academic skills. When children attend classes that reflect the similarities and differences of people in the real world, they learn to appreciate diversity which is essential for peaceful human existence. Respect and understanding grow among them when children of differing abilities and cultures play and learn together. As the philosophy of inclusive education is aimed at helping all children learn, therefore, everyone in the class get benefits. Here, Children learn at their own pace and style within a nurturing learning environment.

The objectives of inclusive education cannot be achieved without awareness and correct understanding of the theme. Therefore, people of the society who involve in the educational system must have right knowledge about it so the fruits of inclusive education can be utilized in right direction. Post-Graduate students are at the highest level of formal educational ladder. Post-Graduate students are the future citizens and accountable to the society and must be able to carry right connotation of inclusive education so that the masses and future generation can get its advantages. Post-Graduate Students are the future architect of our nation and will be able to take initial step in

coming days in this respect through teaching and performing different activities under some extension programmes, social service programmes and N.S.S. camp. They can be the torch bearer for masses of our nation for sustainable development and better world through inclusive education.

Therefore, it is necessary to study their level of perception regarding Inclusive Education, which will enable them to realize the importance of inclusive education for sustainable development and better world. In this background, the present study was conducted seeking opinions of post-graduate Students of Dibrugarh University regarding inclusive education.

#### **Objective of the Study :**

Following is the main objective of the study-

1. To study the level of Opinion of the Post-Graduate Students of Dibrugarh University regarding Inclusive Education.

#### **Methodology :**

**A. Method :** Descriptive method was adopted in the present study.

**B. Population :** The population of the present study comprised of all the post-graduate students pursuing post-graduate courses in the 17 post-graduate Departments of Dibrugarh University in the academic session 2015-16.

**C. Sample :** Through a combination of purposive and incidental sampling techniques, samples of Departments and samples of students were selected for the present study. Out of the 17 Post-Graduate Departments located in the campus of Dibrugarh University, the researchers had selected twelve (12) departments using non-probability sampling technique (Purposive sampling). A sample of 100 students pursuing post-graduate courses in the Dibrugarh University in the academic session 2015-16 was selected from the sampled Departments using incidental sampling technique.

**D. Tools of Data collection :** The investigators had developed a questionnaire in order to collect data for the present study. The questionnaire consists of 10 number of questions printed or typed in a definite order. The questions were formed according to the need of the particular investigation. The questionnaire was checked, edited properly and thus ready for administration.

**E. Collection of Data :** In order to collect data, the investigators had met the respondents personally. Before administration of the questionnaire necessary oral instructions were given and asked them to follow the instructions. Copying was strictly prohibited. There were no time limitations for answering the questionnaire. When they finished answering filled-in forms were collected.

#### **Analysis of Data :**

Quantitative analysis was done in the present study. Percentage was used to carry out the analysis task of the data.

#### **Findings of the Study :**

From the result it is seen that 97% of the respondents opined, inclusive education happens when children with and without disabilities participate and learn together in the same classes. Almost all respondents (99%) opined that Inclusive education is about children with disabilities – whether the disability is mild or severe, hidden or obvious – participating in everyday activities, just like they would if their disability were not present. Majority of the respondents (89%) viewed that Inclusive education is a child's right, not a privilege.

All respondents opined that inclusive education is based on the principle that every child and family is valued equally and deserves the same opportunities and experiences. Majority of the respondents (88%) prefer inclusive education because here children learn at their own pace and style within a nurturing learning environment. All respondents prefer inclusive education as it allows the children with disabilities to learn academic skills with higher expectations and good

instruction. They also opined that in inclusive education respect and understanding grow when children of different abilities and cultures play and learn together.

All respondents opined that when children are educated together, positive academic and social outcomes occur for all the children involved. They also viewed that when children attend classes together without any discrimination that reflect the similarities and differences of people in the real world, they learn to appreciate diversity. Majority of the respondents (98%) opined that inclusive schools are important because it develops friendships and social skills as children with and without disabilities learn with and from each other in inclusive classes.

#### **Conclusion :**

From, the above discussion it becomes clear that in inclusive education all children with disabilities are educated with non-disabled children of their own age and have access to the general education curriculum. Inclusive education is about building friendships, membership and having opportunities just like everyone else. The finding of the study is encouraging enough as the respondents are aware and conscious about inclusive education. Findings also show the high significance of inclusive education. On the basis of the above findings we may suggest to implement inclusive education at all levels of education in comprehensive manner.

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# Attitude of Primary teachers towards Inclusive Education : A study

■ Dr. Manuj Kumar Chutia

## ABSTRACT

*Education for the persons with disabilities is always a major concern for the community and the state not only from the point of view of development of Children with special needs but also from the point of national development as a whole. Inclusion implies all learners, young people with or without disabilities being able to learn together through access to common pre-school provisions, schools and community educational setting with an appropriate network of support services. Classes today are more diverse in respect to the abilities of students and therefore, it is obligatory to be very sensitive and attentive on the part of general education teachers to promote successful implementation of inclusion. In order to do that favourable attitude from the part of general education teacher is more pertinent. In this study a total of 100 primary teachers were randomly selected among which 41 were males and remaining 59 females. Descriptive as well as inferential statistics were applied to analyze the data. Data reveal that primary teachers have positive attitude towards inclusive education and no significant difference has been observed in their attitude towards inclusion irrespective of their gender and locality.*

**Key words:** Inclusion, Attitude, Primary teachers, Gender, Locality.

## Introduction :

Inclusiveness is a new technical term which is recently brought in to use in the field of special education. Education which is specially designed for Children with Special Needs (CWSN) or persons with disabilities is called special education. Education for the persons with disabilities or differently abled is always a major concern for the community and the state. It is the responsibility not only from the view point of development of Children with special needs but from the point of national development as a whole.

Disability is most common among human beings. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 10% of any population is disabled (Thomas, 2005). Approximately 85% of the World's children with disabilities under 15 live in developing countries (Helander, 1993 cited in Kathrine Giffard-Lindsay). So, being a developing nation we have to play a major role in reducing disability from our promising growing children. With proper education and training disability can be reduced to a certain level. According to World Health Organization (WHO) up to 50% of disabilities are preventable, with 70% of blindness and 50% of hearing impairment in children in developing countries being preventable or treatable (DFID, 2000). So it is necessary to adopt some special measures to remove disability from our growing children.

## Inclusive Education and its status in India :

Inclusive education is a new approach that seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. It implies all learners, young people with or without disabilities being able to learn together through access to common pre-school provisions, schools and community educational setting with an appropriate network of support services.

Inclusive education is recently included in the educational scenario. The origin of inclusive education came from the northern part of the world. It is a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners together. Inclusive



education means that all children regardless of their ability level are included in mainstream classrooms, or in the most appropriate or least restrictive environment that students of all ability levels are taught as equals, and that teachers must adjust their curriculum and teaching methodologies so that all students benefit (Kohama, 2012). Earlier, the only way to provide education to the persons with disabilities was special school, the segregation from the mainstreaming. It is also considered as a developmental approach, because the development of the field of special education has involved a series of stages during which education systems have explored different ways of responding to children with disabilities and to students who experience difficulties in learning. Traditionally education to the disables has been provided through separate systems. But, most recently the appropriateness of separate system of education has been challenged, both from human rights perspective and from the effectiveness point of view.

Before 1970 the provision of education to the persons with disabilities was the segregation or special school in India. In 1970 the Integrated Education for Disable Children (IEDC) scheme was started by the central government for providing educational opportunities to learners with special educational needs in regular schools. But the scheme was unable to cover all children with special educational needs. In 1987, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) jointly launched 'Project Integrated Education for Disabled Children' (PIED) with a purpose to strengthen the integration of learners with disabilities into regular schools resulted high enrolment and retention of disable children which was amalgamated with DPEP in 1997.

The National Education Policy 1986, suggested measures for integrating Children with Special Needs with the general community as equal partners for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence. The 86<sup>th</sup> Constitutional amendment of India has made education a fundamental right for all children up to 14 years of age which includes Children with Special Needs also. In 2003,

Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) prepared a draft scheme on inclusive education with an aim to learn together by all learners, young people with or without disabilities in ordinary pre-school provisions, schools and community educational settings with appropriate network of support services.

After the 'Salamanca' World conference statement in Spain on Special Needs Education in 1994, inclusion became the mysterious word in the field of education all over the world. This statement proclaimed that, "Every child has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve & maintain an acceptable level of learning. Every child has unique characteristics, interest, abilities and learning needs, educational system should be designed & educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs. Those with special educated needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child-centered pedagogy, capable of meeting these needs"(Dutta & Banerjee, 2013).

#### **Teachers' attitude towards inclusion :**

To make inclusive education successful, not only helping hand from every corner of the society is essential, but also requires their encouraging attitude towards it. Teachers are very important ingredient of the society; hence they can play a major role in making inclusiveness a successful one. Teachers' favourable attitude is very important in the field of inclusive education. Different previous empirical studies revealed that teachers' attitude play a crucial role in successful implementation of inclusive education. It is more pertinent in case of general education teachers. Classes today are more diverse in respect to the abilities of students and therefore, it is obligatory to be very sensitive and attentive on the part of general education teachers to promote successful implementation of inclusion. Without having favourable attitude of teachers, inclusion cannot be successfully implemented in real sense. Belapurkar and Phatak in their study found that the overall attitude about inclusive education of school teachers

is positive. In the words of Corsini & Auerbach, an attitude is a learned and stable disposition to respond favourably and unfavourably to an object, institution, or even in a consistent way. Studying on teachers' attitude on inclusive education it has been found that teachers generally held positive attitude towards inclusion (Kurniawati, *et al.*, 2012). In another study it was indicated that pre service secondary teachers held positive attitude towards inclusive education; however there was a significant decline in positive attitudes through the years of study. Participants reported more positive attitudes towards inclusion in their first year of university than in following years (Costello & Boyle, 2013).

#### **Significance of the study :**

Disability is universal and very common among every society around the World. This disability differentiates human beings into various categories which creates unhealthy practices among them. Most recently inclusion becomes more popular in the field of education. Teachers play a very prominent role in making inclusion effective and successful. In order to achieve this goal apart from other aspects in general, teachers' attitude in particular is more responsible. Because, it is the teaching community on whom the most challenging responsibility of inclusion is entrusted. The present study is undertaken to look at the mental makeup of teachers and their readiness to take challenges that may arise in the normal classrooms because of inclusion.

#### **Statement of the problem :**

The problem of the present study is 'attitude of primary teachers towards inclusive education: a study.' Here, primary teachers implied those who are working in different lower primary schools of Nagaon sub-division.

#### **Objectives of the study :**

The objectives of the present study were-

1. To study the attitude of primary teachers towards inclusive education.

2. To study the gender and locality wise attitude level of primary teachers towards inclusive education.
3. To study the gender and locality difference in attitude of primary teachers towards inclusive education.

#### **Hypotheses of the study :**

The hypotheses of the present study were as follows-

1. Attitude of primary teachers towards inclusive education is positive.
2. Attitude of primary teachers towards inclusive education irrespective of their gender and locality is positive.
3. There is no significant difference in attitude of primary teachers towards inclusive education irrespective of their gender and locality.

#### **Sampling procedure :**

A total of 100 primary teachers were selected from various lower primary schools of Nagaon sub-division among whom 41 males and remaining 59 females.

#### **Research tool used :**

The research tool used in this study is 'Teachers attitude scale towards inclusive education' prepared by Dr. Vishal Sood and Dr. Arti Anand. The scale has 47 items with three alternatives each in four different areas altogether. The areas are i) psychological behavioural ii) social and parents related iii) curricular and co-curricular iv) administrative. The scale was found to have content and intrinsic validity. The test-retest reliability co-efficient was found 0.82 which indicates high reliability.

#### **Data collection:**

Descriptive survey method was applied to collect data for this study. The investigator met the sampled teachers in a training programme and asked them to fill up the scale as per the guidelines given with.

**Statistical techniques used:**

Collected data were analyzed by applying descriptive as well as inferential statistics. Statistical techniques like percentage, Mean (M), Standard deviation ( $\sigma$ ) and 't' tests were applied to test the hypotheses.

**Result and Discussion:**

The result of the study are shown in the following tables-

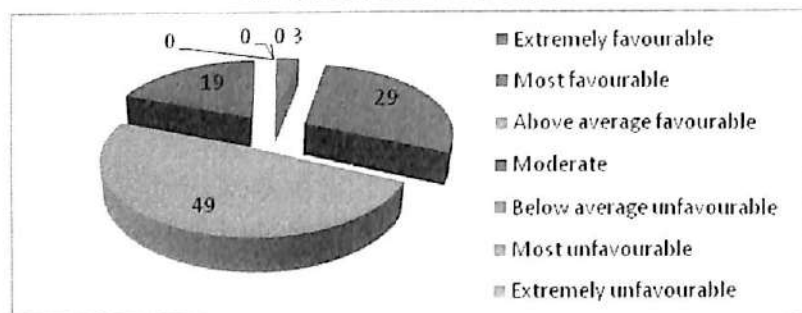
**Table - 1**

Attitude Level of primary teachers towards Inclusive Education

% of teachers	Attitude Level of primary teachers towards Inclusive Education						
	Extremely favourable	Most favourable	Above average favourable	Moderate	Below average unfavourable	Most unfavourable	Extremely unfavourable
	3	29	49	19	0	0	0

**Figure - 1**

Graphical representation of attitude level of primary teachers towards Inclusive Education



From the above table and figure it has been revealed that the attitude level of primary teachers towards inclusive education is favourable. Altogether 3% teachers have shown extremely favourable attitude towards inclusive education whereas 29% have shown mostly favourable attitude, 49% have shown above average favourable attitude and 19% have shown moderate attitude. Here not a single teacher exposes negative or unfavourable attitude towards inclusive education.

**Table - 2**

Gender and locality wise attitude level of primary teachers towards Inclusive Education

Category	Level of attitude of primary teachers towards Inclusive Education %						
	Extremely favourable	Most favourable	Above average favourable	Moderate	Below average unfavourable	Most unfavourable	Extremely unfavourable
Male	2.44	29.27	48.78	19.51	0	0	0
Female	3.39	28.81	49.15	18.64	0	0	0
Urban	2.63	36.84	39.47	21.05	0	0	0
Rural	3.22	24.19	54.84	17.74	0	0	0

From the table above it has been revealed that irrespective of gender and locality primary teachers have shown favourable attitude towards inclusive education. In case of male teachers 2.44% have shown extremely favourable attitude, 29.17% most favourable, 48.78% above average favourable and 19.51% have shown moderate attitude, whereas it is 3.99%, 28.81%, 49.15% and 18.64% respectively in case of female teachers. Having looked at the locality wise attitude of primary teachers, it is observed that 2.63% urban teachers have shown extremely favourable attitude, 36.84% most favourable, 39.47% above average favourable and 21.05% moderate towards inclusive education but it is 3.22%, 24.19%, 54.84% and 17.74% respectively in case of rural primary teachers.

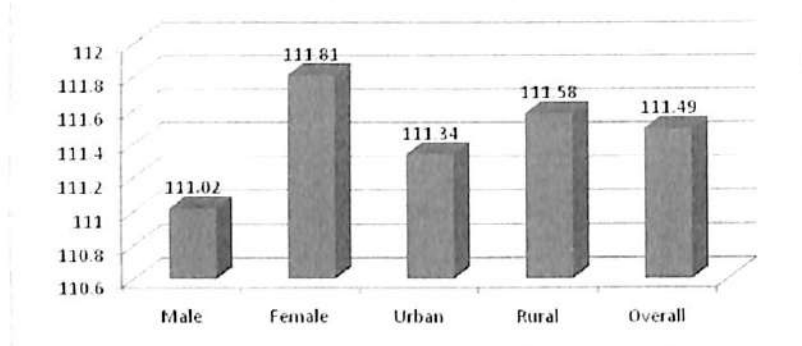
**Table - 3**

Descriptive statistics about attitude of teachers towards Inclusive Education

Category	N	M	SD
Male	41	111.02	8.43
Female	59	111.81	8.33
Urban	38	111.34	9.17
Rural	62	111.58	7.95
<b>Overall</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>111.49</b>	<b>8.34</b>

Figure - 2

Mean score on attitude by various categories of primary teachers



From the above table and figure it has been observed that the mean score on attitude towards inclusive education for male teachers is 111.02 with a standard deviation of 8.43 which is 111.81 and 8.33 respectively in case of female teachers. Female teachers' average attitude score edges slightly over the male teachers. So far the standard deviation is concerned, male teachers out performed female teachers. Similarly if we look at the locality wise level of attitude towards inclusion, the mean attitude score of urban primary teachers is found 111.34 with a standard deviation of 9.17 while it is 111.58 and 7.95 respectively in case of rural primary teachers. While looking at the attitude of primary teachers' altogether, the average scores found to be 111.49 with a standard deviation of 8.34.

Table - 4

Significance of difference in attitude towards inclusive education between male and female teachers

Gender	N	M	's'	df	't'	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remark
Male	41	111.02	8.43	98	0.46	1.98	NS
Female	59	111.81	8.33				

Significant level is at  $P < 0.05$

The 't' value while comparing the significance of difference of

attitude towards inclusive education between male and female primary teachers is found 0.46 ( $t = .046 < .05$ ), which is lower than the table value at 5% level of significance and therefore, cannot reject the null hypothesis. It indicates that there is no significant difference in attitude towards inclusive education between male and female primary teachers. Therefore, it can be said that primary teachers irrespective of their gender are comparable in their attitude towards inclusive education.

Table - 5

Significance of difference in attitude towards inclusive education between Urban and Rural primary teachers

Locality	N	M	's'	df	't'	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remark
Urban	38	111.34	9.17	98	0.13	1.98	NS
Rural	62	111.58	7.95				

Significant level is at  $P < 0.05$

The 't' value while comparing the significance of difference of attitude towards inclusive education between urban and rural primary teachers is found 0.13 ( $t = 0.13 < .05$ ), which is much lower than the table value at 5% level of significance and therefore, cannot reject the null hypothesis. It indicates that there is no significant difference in attitude towards inclusive education between urban and rural primary teachers. Here too, similar kind of attitude towards inclusive education has been observed irrespective of the locality of primary teachers.

#### Major findings :

The major findings of the study are as follows-

- Attitude of primary teachers towards inclusive education is favourable.
- Favourable attitude towards inclusive education has been observed among primary teachers irrespective of their gender.
- Favourable attitude towards inclusive education has been

observed among primary teachers irrespective of their locality.

- The average attitude score towards inclusive education of male primary teachers is a bit lower than female primary teachers.
- The average attitude score towards inclusive education of rural primary teachers' edges over urban primary teachers.
- No negative attitude from any teacher has been observed towards inclusive education.
- No significant difference has been observed in attitude towards inclusive education between male and female primary teachers.
- No significant difference has been observed in attitude towards inclusive education between urban and rural primary teachers.

#### **Suggestions :**

From the study the following suggestions can be made-

- Apart from positive attitude towards inclusive education, inclusion should be realized from the inner heart by every teacher.
- Success of inclusion depends on different components. So, awareness on inclusion should be created among all quarter of the society.
- Inclusive education should be widely included in the teacher training curriculum.
- General education teacher should learn and develop positive attitude towards inclusive education.

#### **Conclusion :**

The results of the present study contribute to an understanding of teachers' attitude towards inclusive education. The study reveals positive attitude towards inclusion by primary teachers irrespective of their gender and locality. Apart from the infrastructural facilities and

available human resources, positive frame of mind from every corner of the society in general and teachers in particular is more essential to make inclusion effective from realistic point of view, otherwise the dream of inclusion will remain unsolved.

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## **Attitude of Normal Developing Children's Parents Towards Inclusive Education**

■ Dr. Sima Kalita      ■ Debajani Borah

### **ABSTRACT**

*UNESCO argued about the broad concept of inclusive education 'can be viewed as a general guiding principle to strengthen education for sustainable development, life-long learning for all and equal access of all levels of society to learning opportunities so as to implement the principles of inclusive education. 'A successful inclusion requires that the community believes in the competence of the system to respond to the needs of all students. Parents of the all school going children is very influential part of the whole community and in this regard their attitude towards inclusive education plays a very decisive role to make inclusion process successful. For successful inclusion positive parental attitude is one of the important key factors and this study is solely designed to explore the attitudes of the parents of "normal" developing children towards the inclusion of children with disabilities into regular primary school. Specifically, the study was designed to experience the attitude of the parents of "normal" developing children of "joor-garh" Lower primary school under "Gabharu" block in Tepur city of sonitpur district. For the study total 60 parents were selected Generally, many of the parents accept inclusive education but most of them still think the "special school" is better place for education of children with disability.*

**Key Words:** parental attitude, inclusion, "normal" developing childrens.

**Introduction :**

From time immemorial, exceptionalities, whether genius or creative, mentally or sensory disabled have a long history of being intimidated, harassed, isolated and segregated. In the past differently abled children were treated as unwanted and were segregated from other children by being forcibly placed in special schools where though their educational needs were met but they lacked behind in their social and overall personality development. Recent international and national legislation has increasing spotlight on the inclusive education. For example, the convention on the rights of persons with a disability (2006) states the right of every person with a disability to participate fully in an inclusive, quality education on an equal basis with people who are not labeled as disabled. As a result in the last three decades there has been a paradigm shift in the way the society looks at the needs of the differently abled children. The society has changed the direction of the way in which it educates the differently abled children who are also referred to as the SEN (Special Education Needs) children. With changing time the need to provide equal opportunities in regular (mainstream) schools within communities is now seen as a priority rather than necessity. The principle of inclusive education was adopted at the "world conference on special needs Education: Access and Quality" (Salamanca, Spain 1994) and was restated at the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal 2000). The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action emphasizes that Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education systems on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education on the basis of disability. Inclusive Education involves "all children, families, and adults' rights to participate in environments where diversity is assumed, welcomed and viewed as a rich resource rather than as a "problem"(Purdue, 2009; p. 807 )

Following the adoption of the Salamanca Statement, in the last few decades there have been efforts internationally to include all children with disabilities in the educational mainstream. Now, the

schools have to accommodate all children and arrange education according to their needs. The philosophy of inclusion has its roots in the ideas and principles governed through equity and equality of opportunities to all without differentiation and discrimination. "Inclusive education means that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic, or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups" (UNESCO, 2003). Inclusive Education Programmes do not focus on the accommodation of these children into a general educational setting (i.e. integration) but are focused on the restructuring of schools to accept and provide for the needs of all students. The feeling of belongingness among all community members- teachers, students and other functionaries is developed through inclusive education and thus it leads to the development of social skills and better social interactions because learners are exposed to real environment in which they have to interact with other learners, each one having unique characteristics, interests and abilities. The non-disabled peers adopt positive attitudes and actions towards learners with disabilities as a result of studying together in an inclusive classroom. In inclusive programmes special instruction and support are provided to any student who is in need of support without labeling him as disabled or exceptional. Thus, no discrimination is made among the disabled and non- disabled children. In simple words, it means that all children with or without disabilities learn together. The ultimate goal of education for children with special needs is their social inclusion, to reach this goal; inclusion in education is one aspect. Negative Attitudes to children with disabilities can be one of the key facilitators or a serious barrier to their inclusion and participation in mainstream education. Inclusive Education provides an opportunity for the development of appropriate attitudes towards people with disabilities. Exposure to students of all types on a daily basis allows typical students to observe that, just

like themselves, students with disabilities have strengths and weakness (Westwood and Graham, 2000). Many studies suggest (Boer et al. 2010; Elzein, 2009) that parents' attitude is a crucial factor for the successful implementation of Inclusive Education as parents are primary stakeholder of the whole process of inclusion. Negative attitudes cycle is limiting opportunities for children with disabilities (Cologon, 2013).

Though nationally there have been efforts to study parents' attitude towards inclusive education, very few substantial efforts have been taken in north-east India in this regard. Against this backdrop, the present study attempted to investigate the parents' attitude towards inclusive education in the schools of JOOR-GARH lower primary and BORDUBIA lower primary school under GABHARU block of TEZPUR subdivision. The study entirely focused on studying the attitudes of parents of normal improving children towards the process of inclusion of children with disabilities.

#### **Significance of the study :**

However, while the inclusive education debate has undoubtedly played a significant role in raising concerns about disabled children in international forums, it is important to understand it not as a philosophy or educational approach exclusively for children with disabilities, but as an approach that is fundamental to achieving the right to education for children from all marginalized groups. UNESCO defined inclusive education as 'a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education.' The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), a holistic human rights treaty addressing the social, economic, cultural, civil, political and protection rights of children. It emphasizes both the right to education on the basis of equality of opportunity, and the broad aims of education in terms of promoting the fullest possible development of the child. Article 2 of the CRC introduces, for the first time in an international human rights treaty,

an explicit obligation on government to assure the realization of all rights to every child without discrimination, including on grounds of disability. But, in this regard discrimination and negative attitudes towards disability is one of the main obstacles in the fulfillment of the obligation to ensure the equal right of all children with disabilities to education. Implementation of inclusive education is hampered by persisting negativity towards disability among all the concerned in education system. To make inclusion process successful, all stakeholders concerned with education process have to form positive attitude towards the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular (mainstream) schools within community. In this regard, attitude of "normal" improving child's parents has been found (Bore, et al. 2010) as the most crucial factor in the process of inclusive education. The very success of inclusive education lies on positive parental attitude as parents are the primary stakeholder in the whole process of education.

Through this micro study the Investigators focused on assessing the attitudes (an emotional toned pre- disposition to react in a certain way towards – a person, an object, an idea or a situation) of the parents' of "normal" improving children towards the inclusion of children with disabilities into the mainstream schools of "GABHARU" Block of TEZPUR City in Sonitpur district, Assam.

#### **Operational Definitions of the Terms Used :**

The terms used in this piece of work were operationally defined as below

1. *Normal Developing Children* : Those children who are free from physical and mental anomalies, deformities. Normally they do not fall in the category of physically deformed , mentally ill or intellectually slow children and their development are at per with their chronological age.
2. *Attitude of Parents* : Generally attitude refers to an emotional predisposition to react in a certain way towards a person, an



object, an idea or in a situation. Here, in this paper attitude of the parents refers to their thinking towards the differently abled children, their concern regarding inclusion, satisfaction.

**Objectives :**

1. To study the attitudes of the parents of childrens of lower primary school towards inclusive education.
2. To find out the difference of attitude between father and mother of normal developing children.

**Hypothesis :**

The first objective of the study was of fact finding type. So it did not require any hypothesis. The null hypothesis related to the second objective is as follows

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There exists no significant difference between the father and mother of the normal developing children towards inclusive education.

**Method :**

Descriptive survey method was used in this study. This paper intended to study the prevailing attitudes of parents towards inclusive education along with the difference of attitude between father and mother.

**Population and Sample :**

Population of this study comprised of all the parents of normal developing children of Tezpur sub-division, Assam, India.

Sample of this study consisted of sixty (60) parents of school going normal developing children. Out of them Thirty (30) were male and thirty (30) female.

**Sampling Technique :**

Multistage random sampling technique was adopted for the selection of the sample. Here lottery method under random sampling technique was applied for the selection of the sample from different stages.

Total number of Educational blocks under Tezpur subdivision is three (3) namely

1. Gabharu block
2. Balipara block
3. Dhekiajuli block

Gabharu block was selected randomly out of the three blocks.

Total number of schools under Gabharu block =237

Out of these schools following two (2) were selected randomly.

1. Joorgarh Lower primary school
2. Bordubia Lower primary school

Number of students in the selected lower primary schools were =194

Number of children with special needs in the selected schools were =12

For the purpose of the study only the parents of normally developing children were selected, excluding the parents of children with special needs. Therefore the parents of the one hundred eighty two (182) children will come under the jurisdiction of the study. The total number of parents of normal developing children in the selected school were three hundred and sixty (360). Out of three hundred and sixty (360) parents sixty (60) were selected randomly as the sample of the study, taking thirty (30) father and thirty (30) mother.

**Tools for data Collection :**

A self structured three point scale on attitude of normal developing children's parents towards inclusive education was used as the tool for collection of data.

The scale covered three dimensions namely attitudes of parents towards inclusion, concern of parents due to inclusion, satisfaction with the present scenario of inclusion. Twenty items

covering the afore mentioned three dimensions were prepared by the investigators consulting the related literature in this area and it was locally standardized.

**Statistical techniques used for analysis of data :**

Following statistical techniques were used to analyze the data

- (i) Percentage analysis of descriptive statistics
- (ii) Chi-square test

**Delimitations of the study :**

The study was limited on the basis of – *Area* - Only one block out of three blocks of Tezpur sub division. *Standard of education*- only lower primary schools are covered under the jurisdiction of the study

**Statistical analysis and discussion :**

After scoring the responses, the scores were tabulated for statistical analysis. Percentage of responses for each item calculated. Finally, chi-square tests were applied to know whether father and mother of “normal” improving child hold different attitude towards inclusion of children with disabilities.

**Table - 1**

Table showing the percentage of responses of the parents under three categories

Items	Responses					
	Agree		Disagree		Not sure	
	Co unt	%	Co unt	%	Co unt	%
Regarding children's equality	60	100	0	0	0	0
Equal access to primary school	56	93.33	2	3.33	2	3.33
Regarding inclusion	60	60	0	0	0	0

Items	Responses					
	Agree		Disagree		Not sure	
	Co unt	%	Co unt	%	Co unt	%
Getting benefit from inclusion	53	88.33	5	8.33	2	3.33
Boosting confidence of differently abled	40	66.67	10	16.67	10	16.67
Concern regarding friendship of normal child with the differently abled child	20	33.33	40	66.67	0	0
Differently abled as obstacle in the teaching learning process	16	26.67	44	73.33	0	0
Separate provision for differently abled	5	8.33	45	75	10	16.67
Regarding length of the period	52	86.67	8	13.33	0	0
Deprivation of normal child in inclusive setting	28	46.67	28	46.67	4	6.67
Friendship with the differently abled will hamper normal growth of normal children	28	46.67	30	50	2	3.33
Development of inferiority feeling among differently abled in inclusive setting	22	36.67	30	50	8	13.33

Items	Responses					
	Agree		Disagree		Not sure	
	Co unt	%	Co unt	%	Co unt	%
Special curriculum for differently abled	34	56.67	26	43.33	0	0
Curriculum or inclusive set up will be easier for the normal children	48	80	2	3.33	10	16.67
Disabled friendly in frastructure will make inclusion successful	30	50	30	50	0	0
Provision of trained teachers to deal with the differently abled	60	100	0	0	0	0
Inclusion helps in development of positive human and social values	60	100	0	0	0	0
Differently abled children also have some special qualities	57	95	2	3.33	1	1.67
Society's good attitude will help in running the inclusive set up	60	100	0	0	0	0
Utilization of the capabilities of the differently abled will help in nation building	45	75	0	0	15	25

From table 1 it is evident that all the parents under the study were in consensus regarding the equality of the children. They agreed that children should be treated equally irrespective of their differences (item 1), but all of them did not agree that they should be given the opportunity to learn in the inclusive setting (item 4).

They have anonymity regarding the equal access to primary education. 93.33% of the parents agreed to equal access to education by the differently abled children also, equal number (3.33%) of parents did not agree and were not sure about that.

Majority (93.33%) of the parents believed that differently abled children also have some special qualities. Only a few (3.33) did not believe that and 1.67% were not sure regarding the possession of such qualities.

Major portion of the parents (88.33%) agreed that differently abled children would be benefitted from inclusion whereas 8.33% disagreed and very few (3.33%) were not sure about that.

Regarding boosting the confidence level of the differently abled children by the inclusive set up maximum number of children (66.67%) agreed, 16.67 disagreed and equal number of parents were not sure whether inclusion will boost up the confidence level of differently abled children or not.

The parents of the normal developing children had different opinion regarding development of friendship of their children with differently abled children. All of them were not anxious that they will develop friendship with the differently abled children than with that of their normal peers. 33.33% of parents were concerned about the possibility of development of such friendship, whereas majority of the parents i.e.- 66.67% were not concerned about this. None of the responses were in the not sure category.

Majority of the respondents (73.33%) did not regard the differently abled children as obstacle to the teaching learning process. However, 26.67% of the parents regard them as an obstacle to the teaching learning process which is a cause of concern to the inclusive set up as well as to the society.

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Majority (75%) of the respondents did not want separate provision for the differently abled children, but few respondents (8.33%) wanted separate setting for the differently abled and 16.67% were not sure whether they wanted it or not. So majority was in favour of inclusion.

Most of the parents (86.67%) wanted that length of the teaching period of inclusive set up should be more than that of non inclusive one as the teacher has to deal with different types of students.

Number of respondents in the agree and disagree category are same. 46.67% of the parents feel that their normal children will be deprived in the inclusive setting and equal number of parents did not have such apprehension and very few (6.67%) were not sure about such deprivation.

50% of the sample parents did not have the prejudice that friendship with the differently abled children will hamper the normal growth of their children and some parents (46.67%) of normal developing children felt that friendship with the differently abled children will hamper the normal growth of their children and 3.33% were not sure of that. So negativity exists among some of the parents.

36.67% of the parents felt that inclusive setting will develop the feeling of inferiority among the differently abled children but half of the sample parents did not have such belief and 13.33% responded in the not sure category.

More than half of the parents (56.67%) felt the need of special curriculum for the differently abled whereas 43.33% were not of the view that provision of special curriculum should be there for the differently abled.

Among the respondents, except a marginal few (3.33%) majority (80%) of the parents felt that curriculum in the inclusive set up would be easier for the normal children whereas 16.67% were not sure about the difficulty level of the curriculum for the normal developing children in the inclusive set up.

Regarding the item disabled friendly infrastructural facility half of the parents were of the opinion that such facilities will make

inclusion successful whereas half of them did not believe that such facilities would make inclusion successful.

Majority of the parents (75%) agreed that utilization of the capabilities of the differently abled will help in nation building and 25% of the respondents were not sure about to that. None of the respondents disagreed to that.

All the parents had synonymous views in the items 16, 17 and 19. All of them agreed that in inclusive set up there should be provision of trained teachers, positive attitude of the society is important for running the inclusive set up and inclusion helps in developing positive human values among the normal children. Item 19 was important on the ground that it depicts human values. The agreeableness of parents in this respect promises a value oriented society and we might hope that in such a society the future of inclusive education is bright.

Table 1 depicts that parents of normal developing children were in a confusing state. On the one hand they supported equality and on the other hand all of them did not want inclusion. So it can be said that psychological barrier was present among the parents of normal developing children regarding inclusive setting at primary stage.

From the analysis of table 1 it was also found that though the parents of the normal developing children in the study area were in favour of inclusive education, they were a bit apprehensive that their normal children will have to suffer in the inclusive setting. Responses of item numbers 10, 11, 14 and 15 showed that.

**Table - 2**

Table showing the  $\chi^2$  values of differences of attitudes of father and mother

Item numbers	Variables	$\chi^2$ value	df	Level of significance
1	Father	7.92**	2	
	Mother			
2	Father	0**	2	
	Mother			

Item numbers	Variables	$\chi^2$ value	df	Level of significance
3	Father	12	2	0.01
	Mother			
4	Father	7**	2	
	Mother			
5	Father	5.44**	2	
	Mother			
6	Father	0**	2	
	Mother			
7	Father	0.74**	2	
	Mother			
8	Father	0.42**	2	
	Mother			
9	Father	2.12**	2	
	Mother			
10	Father	1.72**	2	
	Mother			
11	Father	1.22**	2	
	Mother			
12	Father	1.7**	2	
	Mother			
13	Father	4.12**	2	
	Mother			
14	Father	2.4**	2	
	Mother			
15	Father	2.68**	2	
	Mother			
16	Father	0**	2	
	Mother			
17	Father	0**	2	
	Mother			
18	Father	0**	2	
	Mother			
19	Father	2.2**	2	
	Mother			
20	Father	1.72**	2	
	Mother			

Table - 2 depicts that  $\chi^2$  values for 2 degrees of freedom for nineteen items were significant at 0.01 level of significance except item number 3. So the null hypothesis indicating no difference of attitudes

should be retained only in favour of item number 3 and discarded for the rest of the items. Therefore, it can be said that there existed no significant differences between the attitudes of fathers and mothers regarding getting more benefit in the inclusive setting by the differently abled children. However, they did have differences in attitudes regarding equality of children, inclusion, equal access, boosting confidence, concern regarding friendship with differently abled children, differently abled children as obstacle in teaching learning process, making separate provision of education for the differently abled, increasing the length of class period in inclusive setting, concern regarding deprivation of normal children in inclusive setting, development of inferiority among the differently abled children, making provision of special curriculum for the differently abled children, disabled friendly infrastructure, possession of special qualities by the differently abled children, provision of trained teachers, curriculum, development of positive attitude, society's good attitude, nation building and inclusion etc. Therefore it can be said that parents should change the apprehensive attitude towards inclusion.

Inclusive education has become almost mandatory in India with the adaptation of "zero rejection policy" in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan (2002). Positive parental attitude in this connection is crucial for its successful implementation. The main benefits recognized by the parents were the social acceptance stressing on the fact that students without disabilities are likely to become more accepting and sensitive to the students with disabilities in inclusive setting which would enhance the social development of both. parents are also concerned and uncertain about the quality of instruction, availability of resources and time given by general educators. The parents of normal improving child mostly of the opinion that highly trained educators are better at teaching students with special educational needs than the normal ones. Since this present study was done by taking the 60 parents of normal improving children of two schools (Joor-garh lower primary and Bordubia lower primary school) so the result of the study will not be conclusive one.

**Conclusion :**

A successful process of inclusion requires that the community believes in the competence of the education system to respond to the needs of all students. Parents especially need to get confidence in the capacity of the schools to understand and effectively educate their children with or without disabilities (Favazza & Odom, 1997). Parents of children without disabilities worry that their children's need will not be given importance in an inclusive classroom, fearing that the teacher will have modified the curriculum for the entire class. Parents also worry that their non-disabled child will receive less one-on-one attention, as the teacher devotes all extra time to the child with a disability. Lack of resources is often cited as a barrier in inclusion process. Therefore, it may be reasonable to conclude that with the provision of more pre-service and in-service training, adaptation of curriculum to develop skills required for inclusive settings, provision of more resources and financial support, inclusion can be successfully implemented in reality in schools of "GABHARU" Block of TEZPUR City of Sonitpur District, Assam. The findings of this study were based on a very small sample as the Investigators had taken only two schools under "GABHARU" Educational block of Tezpur. So, we cannot generalize the above findings to all the schools of Sonitpur, Assam. However, this micro study throws a light on one of the influential area i.e. parental attitude of normal improving children towards the successful implementation of inclusive education.

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## **Inclusive Education: Issues and Constitutional provisions**

■ **Dr. Kishore Kumar Sarmah**

### **ABSTRACT**

*Children and youth with disabilities are one of the most disadvantaged groups in the society and they are subjected to social discrimination and reduced opportunities and on top of that there is no proper infrastructure to help them to continue in their education system. Presently, the area of inclusive education has become more important and in India too new research activities are increasing in this field. The government has given more emphasis on it and the Kothari Commission has suggested that the education of the physically handicapped children is to be organized not merely on humanitarian ground but on utilitarian ground, where proper education can make these disabled children to overcome their handicaps and make them acceptable and useful citizens of the society. In this regard the government has started the concept of inclusive education where these disabled children can have the opportunity to sit and learn in the general schools along with the average children. Many issues were discussed and quite a good number of constitutional provisions were formed to assist these children but how far it has been successful needs to be seen. In this paper an attempt has been made to highlight the provisions that were being framed by the government for assisting these disabled children.*

**Key Words :** *Inclusive Education, Disabled Children, Constitutional Provisions, Government Policies.*

### **Introduction :**

The educational scenario has assumed an unprecedented change and schools are the basic structure where education shapes the destiny of a learner who gains expertise and experiences through interaction with the educational environment. To make this interaction into a meaningful one, the environment of the school has to be a conducive one responding to a child's individual capacities and aspirations. The aim of education is the all round development of the child and in the pursuit of this goal the teachers play a significant role along with the design and execution of a planned curriculum, whose effective implementation requires an emotionally intelligent teacher who can sense the slightest changes in the classroom and can manoeuvre the teaching strategies accordingly.

An emotionally intelligent teacher can bring about a positive change in the student by presenting before him a model behavior and emotional intelligence in his day to day learning process. Now-a-days the system of education in our schools are meant for the normal students but the disabled ones do not get profit out of this as the curriculum and method of teaching are meant for the average children, the problem arises to satisfy other categories reading in the same school. Even the pattern of special education is residential system which may not fulfill the desires and dreams of the disabled. So the provision of inclusive education through guidance programme may be accepted as remedial measures to solve their personal, educational and vocational problems.

Inclusive education means to bring all the children to learn together in spite of any difference that they possess. It denotes the norms of inclusive education to accept all the people with or without disability to achieve the goal of Education for All. Kothari Commission (1964-66) in its report mentioned the importance of integrated education and in 1982 by the Department of Education, Human Resource Development Integrated Education for Disabled (IED) was formulated. Then in 1987 NCERT launched a project in Integrated Education for the Disabled (PIED). However, in 1994, UNESCO conference at

Salamanca, Spain declared to adopt the principle of inclusive education as a matter of law and policy. As India had joined in the conference, in 1995 it passed the Persons with Disabilities Act with a view to integrate the disabled children in the normal schools.

#### **Need and importance of Inclusive Education :**

Many of the world's poorest countries are not on track to meet the concept of inclusive education, this failure has denied many people their right to education which is at risk and countries must develop more inclusive approaches, linked to wider strategies for protecting vulnerable populations and overcoming inequality. Some of the needs or importance of such type of education are-

- It facilitates the access of the disabled children to the education field and bring out all round development of the special need children
- Disabled children are prevailed with more facilities to enable them to gain social, emotional and intellectual development
- Involvement of family members are marked more and this in turn has made the society alert to receive the disabled
- Highly trained teachers and special facilities are required in special schools, whereas, in inclusive education the regular teachers performs both the activities
- It helps in understanding their abilities and capacities to the maximum extent possible and assists them in understanding and accepting themselves with their deficiencies
- Inclusive education provides an opportunity to help these special children to adjust themselves to the environment and to integrate them to the mainstream by providing them the environment for their educational placement
- It provides an opportunity in seeking successful transition from school to community thereby creating a change in attitude and thinking of the members at the society towards

disability and to accept them to identify their needs in the society. This in turn assist in developing the basic living skills for personal independence

- Provide educational opportunities and facilities to students with disabilities in the general educational system and provide training to the general school teachers to meet the needs of the children with disabilities
- It helps to prepare plans for the special problems and includes a follow up service providing a variety of experiences to the child according to age and IQ level
- It identifies problems of children and supports means and ways to manage them, guiding the parents in getting cooperation from the appropriate services

#### **Issues and Challenges of Inclusive Education :**

Inclusive education programme do not focus on the accommodation of exceptional children into a general education setting but are focused on the restructuring of the school to accept and provide for the needs of all students. It aims to provide a favourable setting for achieving equal opportunities and full participation for all, thus bringing children with special needs well within the purview of mainstreaming education. The curriculum in the school is generally prepared keeping the normal child in view but the principle of flexibility of the curriculum should allow suitable modification to suit to special needs. It has been seen that children with slight hearing or orthopedic disabilities have the same level of intelligence as normal children and can be given the same level of curriculum. Children with learning disabilities can also follow the same curriculum if remedial action is provided to them for overcoming their learning disabilities.

Mentally retarded children are however less advanced mentally and should be placed in a class lower than their age and it should be noted that some curriculum adaptation have to be made to the curriculum for each kind of children with disablement. Beside this, care should be there to take into account that determination of access



models followed by specially trained personnel in appropriate environment of utmost importance. Hence it is imperative that efforts must be directed towards appropriate instruction including designing a plan of individualized assistive technology instruction and teaching a specialized hierarchy of skills that is based on diagnostic evaluation. Access to and instruction with assistive technology must be driven by individual needs and not by logistic constraints such as availability of equipments, location or model of service delivery or funding restraints. In inclusive classrooms, the students with disabilities do not always have access to the same learning tools as their classmates; they had to depend on their peers and teachers to describe the matter to them.

The use of educational software has become an important tool and their use is continuously being emphasized in the classroom and it poses certain challenges for the students with disabilities. For instance while a sighted student can learn a practical lesson based on interactive simulation, a student with low vision may have to depend on assistive interactive software for learning. Instruction by qualified teachers are often hindered by lack of pre-service and in-service training hence, there is the urge to eliminate their problems and opportunities must be provided for professional development through partnerships among the educational institutions as well as other professionals to keep abreast of emerging technologies.

Referring to issues of structural adaptations for effective orientation and mobility of disabilities, most of the schools in India do not possess many of the prescribed infrastructural standards as specified by the 1995 disability act. Attempts should be made to bring positive benefits to those who need to use technology for a specific range of tasks. It is important that schools must ensure that all students have adequate access to instruction as documented by the individualized education programme. There is also a need to bring separate pedagogies together in a unified instructional design.

### **Constitutional Provisions and Programmes on Inclusive Education :**

According to the Indian constitution, the state shall take steps to provide free and compulsory education to all the children until they complete the age of 14 years but India is still too far away because of economic and administrative obstacles. In a real sense education is a social process where the school is a democratic community whose role is to make education a continuous reconstruction of accumulated experiences. In this connection the government has underlined the need for a fresh look at the system of education and preparation of policies and programmes for the development of personality, initiative and creativity as one of the major objective for such type of education. Some of the policies and programmes that have been adopted for inclusive education are as such-

1. The United Nations has declared 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons and during that year a number of plan of action were adopted with an emphasis on equalization of opportunities, rehabilitation and prevention of disabilities. Plans were taken to assist the disabled persons to take part fully in life through improved living conditions, development of their societies and providing equal share resulting from socio-economic development. The main objective of education for challenged children under this act is to increase public awareness through understanding and acceptance of persons who are disabled and encouraging them to form organizations through which they can express their views and form ideas to improve their situation.
2. National Policy on Education (1986) and its programme of action : The National Policy of Education (NPE) was adopted in May 1986 to provide equal education opportunities to all the children. The objective is to integrate the physically and mentally handicapped children with the general community as equal and to prepare them for normal growth so that they can be in a position to face life with confidence. With the aim of providing educational opportunities from disabled children in common

schools so as to facilitate their retention in the school system, the government has been implementing a centrally sponsored scheme of Inclusive Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) since 1982-83. The scope includes pre-school training for disabled children and counseling the parents. Under this scheme 100% financial assistance is provided along with other facilities. Measures were taken in this regard and where ever possible, education of children with mild handicap will be common with that of others and adequate arrangement should be made to provide vocational training to them. Steps are taken to reorient the teachers' Training Programme to deal with the special difficulties of handicapped children, special schools with hostel facilities will be provided for the severely handicapped children.

3. **Integrated Education Scheme (1992) for the mildly challenged :** This centrally sponsored scheme was introduced for providing educational opportunities for children with disabilities in general schools to facilitate their retention in the school system. Under this scheme, provisions are there for free distribution of reading materials, allowances, appointment of special teachers and provision of resource rooms and removal of architectural barriers in schools.
4. **Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation Act (1995) :** This Act was developed after the Educational scheme of 1992 for enactment of Persons with Disabilities. This Act makes it a statutory responsibility on the part of the government to provide free education in an appropriate environment for all children with disabilities up to the age of 18 years and calls upon the local authorities to promote the integration of students with disabilities in normal schools. In addition to this, the government should promote schemes for varieties of educational initiatives and strategies.
5. **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) :** It is a centrally sponsored scheme with a time bound target to achieve Universal

Elementary Education (UEE) by 2010 with 'zero rejection' as its cornerstone. This programme provides support for the inclusion of children with disabilities in the general schools at the elementary level. The National Curriculum Framework on School Education (NCF-2005) recommends making the curriculum flexible and appropriate to accommodate all children with or without disabilities in the schools.

6. **National Action Plan for Inclusion in Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities (IECYD) :** It was started by the HRD ministry in 2005 and gives emphasis for inclusion of children and young persons with disabilities in all the general schools from elementary to higher levels. As SSA supports inclusion of children with special needs at the elementary level only it is desirable to introduce a scheme up to the higher secondary stage so that the disabled students can gain some facilities from the general education system and form an opportunity to do something in life. Moreover, girls with disabilities will be in a position to receive special focus and efforts to gain access to secondary schools and also guidance for shaping up their talents.
7. **Human Rights as per the UN Standard Rules 1994 :** Person with disabilities suffer from discrimination based on prejudice and ignorance on the part of the society. Adding to that, these people are not allowed to enjoy the same opportunities as other people due to lack of access to essential services. This attitude of the society towards them is a violation to the rights of a human being and as such, a shift to the Human Rights perspective has been endorsed at the level of the United Nations to form the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for People with Disabilities. The disability right is not about the enjoyment of specific right by people with disabilities but is a social security, protection of the family, adequate standard of living, right to physical and mental health, right to education and the right to take part in cultural activities

and enjoy the benefits of scientific progress.

8. The Person with Disability Act (PWA) 1995 : Global initiatives have influenced India where a new legislation was enacted in 1994 which states that disabled children should be educated in an integrated setting as far as possible. This act was started with a proclamation on the full participation and equality of people with disabilities in the Asian and Pacific region. It is landmark legislation for the disability movement as it presents a vision for people with disabilities who were victim of prejudice, neglect or treated as lesser human beings. This act also provides preventive and promotional aspects of rehabilitation like creation of a barrier-free environment and establishment of home for severely disabled persons.

#### **Conclusion :**

The system of education in our schools are meant for the normal students where the disabled and the slow learners do not gain profit out of this as the curriculum and methods of teaching are meant for the average children. It is believed that educating the disabled children with the non-disabled one together creates an atmosphere of understanding and tolerance but one serious disadvantage is that a disabled student may require much more attention from the teacher than the non-disabled ones. Time and attention may thus be taken away from the rest of the class to meet the need of a single student with special needs and the effect it creates depends strongly on the particular disability in question and the resources available for support. to add, parents fear that the general education teachers do not have the training and skills to accommodate special needs students in a general education system.

Quite a good number of Acts and legislation have been introduced by the government and the interest of the legislation is extremely laudatory as it is the first time that India recognizes persons with disabilities as equal human beings. However, no rights have been conferred on them nor is there any enforcing agency or fiscal support

no adequate preparation has been made for the implementation. Specialized services are being promised but there is no infrastructure to deliver them. No remedies have been provided for non-performer and there are no provisions to prosecute or file any legal proceedings in respect of any act done in good faith or intended to be done under the act. To this extent the proposed legislation remains only as statement of pious interest rather than a vibrant proactive instrument for the betterment of the people with disabilities who remain marginalized without policy or substantive service.

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# Secondary School Teacher's Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education in Morigaon District - A Study

■ Sayanika Deka

## ABSTRACT

*A willingness on the part of teachers to support all children in the mainstream classroom, including children with special needs, is the hallmark of inclusive education. Successful and effective implementation of inclusive education depends upon teachers having positive attitudes towards it. The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Morigaon District of Assam. The study was conducted on 30 teachers. Participants were selected from 3 secondary schools of Morigaon District of Assam by applying random sampling technique. The ATIES (Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education Scale; Wilczenski, 1992) was used to measure teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. The study revealed that secondary school teachers had predominantly positive attitudes towards inclusive education for children with special needs, except for children who had physical disabilities such as visual or hearing impairments. Some obstacles were also identified which have an effect on their attitudes and knowledge such as insufficient knowledge of inclusive education, inclusion confusion, lack of training, lack of teaching materials and large class size.*

**Key Words :** Teacher, Attitude, Inclusive Education.

## Introduction :

Inclusive education (IE) is a new approach towards educating the children with disability and learning difficulties with that of normal ones under the same roof. It seeks to address the learning needs of all children with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to exclusion. This is possible only in flexible education system that assimilates the needs of diverse range of learners and adapts itself to meet these needs. The concept of inclusive education is based on the principle that all children regardless of ability or disability have a basic right to be educated alongside their peers in their local schools (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 1994). The goal of inclusive education is to break down the barriers that separate general and special education and make the included students feel like, and actually become an active member of general education classroom. The report of the National Commission on Special Education describes inclusive education as, "a method of educating a child in need of special education in a general education classroom, in the school that child would have attended if not disabled, with age appropriate peers, and with appropriate supports and services" (The National Commission, 2005).

The attitude of teachers is paramount to the successful implementation of inclusive education. A positive teacher attitude toward inclusion may be the key to the success of including students with special needs. The attitudes of these teachers may play an important role to the success of an inclusion model.

## Significance of the Study :

Inclusive education allows the inclusion with regular children and children with special needs by placing them together in mainstream classes, to be taught and instructed by mainstream teachers. It is considered a way to create an environment that can give all children access to education. Students with disabilities are able to fit into an inclusive programme because they usually receive some individual support from class teachers to help them complete the required tasks.

Academic success depends on how much a student learns from teachers, whether they have disabilities or not. Teachers play a vital role in the learning process of students because they are the one who impart the knowledge. Successful and effective implementation of inclusive education depends upon teachers having adequate knowledge of it through training as well as positive attitudes towards it. This study will help to understand teachers' attitudes, views and knowledge about inclusive education in mainstream secondary education settings.

#### **Objective of the Study :**

To study about the attitude of secondary school teachers of Morigaon District towards inclusive education.

#### **Sample :**

The study was conducted on a sample of 30 secondary school teachers who were selected randomly from three Secondary Schools i.e., S.T Theresa's school, Muhila Home Model School and Morigaon Town High School of Morigaon District.

#### **Methodology :**

In the study Descriptive survey method was used to collect data.

#### **Tools Used :**

The tool for data collection used in this study was a questionnaire that was divided into two parts. Part one was designed to obtain participants' professional and demographic data. Secondary school teachers were asked to provide information about different demographic variables such as gender, age, experience, educational background, training skills, year of teaching, and teaching subjects. Part two of the questionnaire was taken from the Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES) developed by Wilczenski (1992) containing 16 items. It was designed to elicit participants' attitudes toward the inclusion of students with various disabilities into regular classrooms. This 16-item scale measured participants' attitudes toward

four aspects of inclusive education: social, physical, academic and behavioural. The following table shows the item topics categorized under these four aspects.

**Table -1**  
Item topics of the aspects of the questionnaire

Disability Aspects (item number)	Item Topics
Physical (3,7,11,14)	Lack of speech Vision impairment Hearing impairments Mobility problems
Academic (1,5,10,13)	Minor regular curriculum changes Major regular curriculum changes Functional academic training Self help skill training
Behavioural (2,8,12,15)	Physical aggression Verbal aggression Disruptive behaviour Conflicts with authority
Social (4,6,9,16)	Shyness Language disorders Speech disorders Absenteeism

Each aspect consists of four items, for example the physical aspect consists of lack of speech, vision impairments, hearing impairments and mobility problems. In order to elicit attitudes towards inclusive education, the phrase "should be in regular classes" was included in each statement of the questionnaire. The tool indicates the agreement level with each item by using a 6 point Likert Scale. The possible ranges of responses on the likert scale are (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=disagree somewhat, 4=agree somewhat, 5=agree, 6=strongly agree). The scale yields a total score that may range from 16 to 96, with a lower score indicating a less favourable attitude

and a higher scale indicates a most favourable attitude.

The ATIES is a widely used tool for measuring teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. ATIES scores are reliable and valid. Wilczenski analysed the reliability of the ATIES and the scale has been used by researchers in different developing countries. These studies indicate that the ATIES scale can be used to explore teachers' views or attitudes towards inclusive education in the current context.

#### Analysis of Data :

After collecting the data from teachers about their attitudes towards inclusive education through Questionnaire, the data were analyzed statistically. Questionnaire data were turned into numbers according to the six point scale, with a data range of 1-6. Arithmetic means were calculated. A mean score on any aspect higher than 3.50 indicates that participants somewhat agree with that aspect (which included four individual items).

**Table - 2**

Teachers' attitudes about inclusive education for children with different types of disabilities (%)

Items	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Somewhat Disagree (%)	Somewhat Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1. Students whose academic achievement is 2 or more years below the other students in the grade should be in regular classes	-	10 (33.33)	4 (13.33)	4 (13.33)	4 (13.33)	8 (26.67)
2. Students who are physically aggressive toward their peers should be in regular classes.	1 (3.33)	9 (30)	2 (6.67)	3 (10)	12 (40)	3 (10)

Items	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Somewhat Disagree (%)	Somewhat Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
3. Students who cannot move without help from others should be in regular classes.	2 (6.67)	6 (20)	2 (6.67)	5 (16.67)	12 (40)	3 (10)
4. Students who are shy and withdrawn should be in regular classes.	-	1 (3.33)	3 (10)	2 (6.67)	15 (50)	9 (30)
5. Students whose academic achievement is 1 year below other students in the grade should be in regular classes.	-	7 (23.33)	4 (13.33)	7 (23.33)	9 (30)	3 (10)
6. Students whose speech is difficult to understand should be in regular classes	3 (10)	1 (3.33)	2 (6.67)	6 (20)	12 (40)	6 (20)
7. Students who cannot read standard print and need to use Braille should be in regular classes.	8 (26.67)	10 (33.33)	4 (13.33)	3 (10)	3 (10)	2 (6.67)
8. Students who are verbally aggressive toward their peers should be in regular classes.	1 (3.33)	3 (10)	4 (13.33)	4 (13.33)	12 (40)	6 (20)

Items	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Somewhat Disagree (%)	Somewhat Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
9. Students who have difficulty expressing their thoughts verbally should be in regular classes.	-	4 (13.33)	-	7 (23.33)	15 (50)	4 (13.33)
10. Students who need training in self-help skills and activities of daily living should be in regular classes.	-	2 (6.67)	5 (16.67)	5 (16.67)	14 (46.67)	4 (13.33)
11. Students who use sign language or communication boards should be in regular classes.	6 (20)	12 (40)	5 (16.67)	1 (3.33)	3 (10)	3 (10)
12. Students who cannot control their behaviour and disrupt activities should be in regular classes.	3 (10)	4 (13.33)	6 (20)	5 (16.67)	10 (33.33)	2 (6.67)
13. Students who need an individualized functional academic program in everyday reading and math skills should be in regular classes.	1 (3.33)	2 (6.67)	3 (10)	6 (20)	14 (46.67)	4 (13.33)

Items	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Somewhat Disagree (%)	Somewhat Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
14. Students who cannot hear conversational speech should be in regular classes.	4 (13.33)	7 (23.33)	8 (26.67)	6 (20)	1 (3.33)	4 (13.33)
15. Students who do not follow school rules for conduct should be in regular classes.	3 (10)	-	4 (13.33)	4 (13.33)	15 (50)	4 (13.33)
16. Students who are frequently absent from school should be in regular classes.	2 (6.67)	2 (6.67)	2 (6.67)	3 (10)	14 (46.67)	7 (23.33)

Table 2 shows that for 13 of the 16 items there is a higher response rate within the three agreement levels (strongly agree/ agree/ somewhat agree) than the disagreement levels. Participants largely disagreed with items which were related to including children with vision impairments or hearing difficulties or who need to use sign language in the classroom. The overall mean of all respondents on all the statements of the ATIES was 3.97. This mean indicates an attitude that falls between response numbers 3 and 4, that is between "somewhat agree" or "somewhat disagree", but leans heavily towards 4, which pertains to the response "somewhat agree" on the questionnaire scale. Higher scores indicate more favourable attitudes towards inclusive education.

#### Findings and Discussion of the Study :

The following findings were revealed by this study:-

The findings from the questionnaire data indicate that the thirty teachers showed predominantly positive attitudes towards inclusive

education, and the positivity of attitudes varies based on the type of disability. Overall, teachers' responses revealed that participants are more prepared to accommodate students who need academic modification, who have behavioural difficulties, or students with social concerns rather than children with hearing or visual impairment. They think that students who are one year below than the average student should be in regular classes and they hold similar views towards the inclusion of students whose academic standard is two or more years behind. On the contrary, participants showed more negative attitudes towards students who need to use sign language or who cannot hear conversational speech in class. Furthermore, teachers hold positive views on students who play truant, or disrupt activities, and students who have difficulty in expressing their thoughts. In addition, most participants opined that students who are physically aggressive should be in regular classes. Overall, item-based findings suggest that participants are more prepared to accommodate students whose needs are the result of academic or social deficits rather than children with hearing or visual disabilities.

It is notable that teachers' positive attitudes do not mean that they do not have any negative views towards inclusive education. On the whole, however, the teachers showed more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of children with social concerns or academic or behavioural difficulties than children with physical disabilities such as vision impairments or hearing loss or mobility problems. All participants conceded that they did not have sufficient practical knowledge of inclusive education. They gave a variety of reasons for their negative attitudes, particularly towards inclusive education for children with physical disabilities. These reasons included insufficient knowledge, lack of training to increase this knowledge, large class sizes and a lack of teaching materials. Interestingly, teachers acknowledged some government initiatives and policies as reasons for positive views towards inclusive education. Teachers also encouraged inclusion because they viewed it as a manifestation of the basic human right of education, and a way of reducing social discrimination. In spite of

insufficient knowledge and some reservations about inclusion, teachers generally showed supportive attitudes towards inclusive education.

## CONCLUSION

Teachers' attitude plays a pivotal role regarding the successful implementation of inclusive education. On this premise, this study was conducted to determine the attitude of secondary school teachers regarding inclusive education.

To conclude, it can be said that inclusive education is a mandate today. In-fact, inclusive education is the need of the hour. It becomes a crucial issue in the field of education, which attracts all concerned. It is a matter of immense pleasure that inclusive education is in a progressive way all over the world, but still there is room for improvement. To remove the gap between inclusion and exclusion, teachers, parents, society, administrators and government should collectively work to implement the policies of inclusive education.

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## **Attitude of Elementary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education –A Study on the Effect of Interventions**

■ Dr (Mrs) Mun Kalita     ■ Jonali Borah

### **ABSTRACT**

*One of the greatest problems the world is facing today is the growing number of persons who are excluded from the meaningful partnership in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their communities. Such a society is neither efficient nor safe. Inclusive Education can be seen as a stepping stone for a future inclusive society and it is a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education (Usha and Thankam, 2011). The Government of India has formulated various policies, schemes and programmes for inclusive education at the national level. In spite of various efforts of the Government of India, the inclusive education is at its infancy in the country and it should be encouraged further because it would make education accessible to children with diverse needs and disadvantaged groups of the society in all parts of the country. Inclusive education system and societies can only be realized if teachers are aware of the nature of the situation and are committed to work for it. Without the changes in the attitude towards the pupil with disability/difference, all efforts to bring successful implementation will certainly go in vain. Fostering*

*a positive attitude towards difference is not a one-day task, but a gradual and continuous effort like successful dissemination of public awareness programme. The present study has planned to examine the effect of some interventions on the attitude of Elementary School Teachers towards inclusive education. For this purpose, 50 Elementary School Teachers were selected as sample. For collection of data an Attitude Scale was used. One group pre-test/ post-test field experimental design was used to complete the study. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as Mean, S.D., and 't'-test. The main findings show that Elementary School Teacher's attitude towards inclusive education was low before their exposure to interventions.*

**Key Words:** *Teacher Attitude, Inclusive Education, Intervention.*

#### **Introduction :**

Education plays an important role in providing opportunities for the development of potentialities of an individual to contribute to the development of a nation. Education is considered as the strongest instrument for achieving the ideals of life and proper development of a human personality. Upholding this belief the Government of India declared "Education for All" by the year 2012. The education of children with special needs was included in this declaration. India is the seventh largest and second most populous country in the world. The Census of India 2001 shows that 2.13% of its population is disabled and a major part of it school-going children. Providing education to such a large chunk of population in least restrictive environments is a major challenge for policy makers and educators. Inclusive schools are those educational institutions where children with disabilities are provided education with non-disabled in the same physical, social and emotional environments. Currently, a trend towards inclusive education in India has been observed (Berwal and Bala, 2011).

Inclusive Education can be seen as a stepping stone for a

future inclusive society and it is a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education (Usha and Thankam, 2011). Through inclusive education children with disabilities remain on a path that leads to an adult life as a participating member of society. Meeting all their needs together, increases their ability to achieve academic and physical growth to their potential, and it enhances their overall quality of life.

The Government of India has formulated various policies, schemes and programmes for inclusive education at the national level. The Indian Education Commission (Kothari Commission) 1964-66, reviewed the status of education in India and made prominent recommendation of introducing a Common School System means the National System of Education that is founded on the principles of equality and social justice and provides education of a comparable quality to all children in an equitable manner irrespective of their caste, creed, language, gender, economic or ethnic background, location or disability (physical or mental). The Right to Education Bill of 2009 has brought a new hope for education of the disabled children. Schemes such as Integrated Education for the Disabled Children (IEDC), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamic Shiksha Abhiyan contain provision for supporting the education of such children.

In 2005 the MHRD has formulated a Comprehensive Action Plan for the Inclusive Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities. In this connection, the Government will assume nodal responsibility to monitor, guide, facilitate and coordinate the new Action Plan. The UGC will assist all universities to establish a separate Department of Disability Studies including modules on foundations of inclusion and on inclusive practices, research and discourse.

To support the entire process of inclusive education, NCERT is addressing issues of curriculum and pedagogy. Experiences of programmes like DPEP and various research findings have shown that

the number of children with special needs in every district is by no means small. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, which is a nodal Ministry for disability issues estimates the number of children having special needs as 5%. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act, 1995 provides that every child with a disability shall have access to free education up to 18 years of age. This is a statutory responsibility cast on all appropriate Governments.

The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCERT, 2005) has recommended inclusive schools for learners with special educational needs by making appropriate modifications in the content, presentation and transaction strategies, preparing teachers and developing learning friendly evaluation procedures. In 2005, National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) signed an MoU to have at least one special teacher in every inclusive school to cater to the needs of disabled children admitted there as a result of inclusive education movement.

Inclusive education system and societies can only be realized if teachers are aware of the nature of the situation and are committed to work for it. Without the changes in the attitude towards the pupil with disability/difference, all efforts to bring successful implementation will certainly go in vain. Fostering a positive attitude towards difference is not a one-day task, but a gradual and continuous effort like successful dissemination of public awareness programme. But awareness about disabling conditions is low among the schools, and disabled in the Indian society are believed to be dependent, helpless, beggars, immoral and evil beings to be feared, avoided and rejected.

Therefore, in order to eradicate misconceptions and false beliefs in the school community, particularly among teachers, an effective action plan is needed to generate awareness about different aspects of inclusive schooling. The investigators felt that intervention strategies can play an effective role in creating awareness, inculcating knowledge about abilities and potentialities of disabled, removing negative attitudes and reinforcing positive ones among their teachers toward the disabled.

### **Statement of the Problem :**

Considering the above discussion the investigators have taken interest in studying the attitude of teachers about Inclusive education. The investigators have also taken interest on study the same after providing some intervention strategies and hence the problem stated as - "Attitude of Elementary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education –A Study on the Effect of Interventions".

### **Objectives :**

1. To study the attitude of Elementary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education.
2. To design and implement some interventions to enhance the level of attitude of Elementary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education.
3. To study the effect of the interventions on the level of attitude of Elementary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education.

### **Hypotheses :**

In order to realize the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were framed:

1. Elementary School Teachers have significantly low level of attitude towards Inclusive Education.
2. The intervention strategies will have significant effect on enhancing the level of attitude of Elementary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education.

### **METHODOLOGY :**

#### **Population :**

The population of the study comprised all the Elementary School Teachers of Dibrugarh district of Assam.

#### **Sample :**

There are six Educational Blocks in Dibrugarh district of Assam.

The sample of the present study comprised 50 Elementary School Teachers of Tengakhat Educational Block of Dibrugarh district of Assam. The sample was drawn by using purposive sampling technique.

#### Method:

In the present study one group pre-test and post-test field experimental design was employed. The design involved three operational stages. The first stage involved pre-testing of subject's attitude towards inclusive education.

The second stage covered experimental treatment for a period of three days- five hours per day. The experimental treatment comprised the use of interventions. The experimental treatment was given in a venue arranged in the Conference Hall of Tengakhat College of Dibrugarh district of Assam. The interventions include- lectures by experts, documentary show, distribution of post cards and literatures.

The third stage included post-testing of the same group using the same tool after a gap of fifteen days of treatment phase. This was done to check the retention of information given in treatment phase.

#### Tools used in the study :

The investigators used the following tool to collect data. Scale of Attitude towards Inclusion of Pupil with Learning Differences by P. Usha and P. K. Thankam (2009) of Kerala. This scale consists of 40 items. Criterion-related validity is 0.53 and test re-test validity is 0.71.

#### Statistical Techniques used :

For analysis of data – Mean, Standard Deviation and t- test were used.

#### Result and Discussion :

Table - 1 shows difference between the Mean of Pre-test and Post-test Scores on attitude of Elementary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education.

Sl. No.	Group	No. of B.Ed. Students (N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of significance
1.	Pre-test	50	92.50	4.92	9.94	0.01
2.	Post-test	50	106.62	5.13		

The effect of interventions on attitude was examined by comparing the mean pre-test and mean post-test scores as is shown in Table- 1. The Table-1 represent the scores of Mean, SD, and 't' ratio for the attitude of Elementary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education before and after intervention programme. The pre-test Mean and S.D. scores were found to be N=50, M=92.50, SD= 4.92 respectively and that of the post-test N=50, M=106.62, SD=5.13 respectively. The 't' ratio was ( $t$ ) = 9.94.

From the table it is observed that the calculated 't' value ( $t$  = 9.94) is more than the table value (2.58 at 0.01 level of significance). So, it is significant at 0.01 level of significance. It may be inferred that the attitude of Elementary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education before and after the implementation of interventions was found to differ significantly. Elementary School Teachers' post-test score was higher than their scores on pre-test. Thus, it indicates an increase in the level of attitude of Elementary School Teachers' after the implementation of intervention strategies. Hence, the intervention strategies were found to have a significant positive impact on Elementary School Teachers' attitude.

The finding of the study revealed that attitude of the sample was enhanced as a result of their exposure to intervention strategies. The result of the present study support the findings of other studies conducted by – Pandit (1987), Darra Pace (2000), Yadav (2002), Berwal and Bala (2011) etc. They examined the effectiveness of intervention strategies on attitude and awareness of students, teachers, administrators about disability and inclusive education.

**Conclusion :**

By analyzing recent studies, it is observed that teacher's attitude plays a vital role in including the pupil with learning difference in general school than the other variables that inhibit successful inclusion. Teacher's attitude and awareness whether it is related to their own experience or knowledge, results in better accommodation of pupil with learning difference. That is why, it is very essential to create awareness among teacher community before entering into their profession for better and fruitful results of inclusion: Collaborative, cooperative programs or works among authorities, teachers, special educators, community representatives and also parents of disabled and non-disabled children are essential for successful inclusion.

Inclusive education is Human Rights Education. Providing a quality education for all students in inclusive settings is the most challenging issue in education. Inclusivity will characterize the schools of the new millennium. The main purpose of the present study was to examine the attitude of Elementary School Teachers' towards Inclusive Education and creating proper awareness among them towards Inclusive Education. Inclusive education system and societies can only be realized if teachers are aware of the nature of the situation, and are committed to work for it. Without the changes in the attitude towards the pupil with disability/difference, all efforts to bring successful implementation will certainly go in vain. The finding of the study revealed that attitude of the sample was enhanced as a result of their exposure to intervention strategies. So, it is very essential to organize such an awareness programme not only for Elementary School Teachers but also for teachers working at all levels of education for proper inclusion.

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## **Role of Civil Societies, NGO's towards Inclusive Education**

■ Rathindra Narayan Das ■ Mridul Kanti Malakar

### **ABSTRACT**

*In the line of the draft scheme on Inclusive Education prepared by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (2000), "Inclusive Education means all learners, young people with or without disabilities being able to learn together in ordinary Pre-School Provisions, Schools and Community Educational setting with appropriate network of support services". It means the process of educating children those who are in need of special educational needs alongwith their peers in the mainstream school. The School is to meet the individualized goals of students with special educational needs within the general educational settings and activities. According to the UNESCO Report 1994, "All children learn together, whatever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive Education provides Child-to-child learning and participation of parents and Community in planning and execution of services for children in general and disabled children in particular." In India, the Role of the Civil Societies and the NGO's in the development of the inclusive education is highly praiseworthy. The NGOs have been involved in the field of educating children with disabilities since the early 1950's. The UNICEF provides strong support to the NGOs for this purpose. They have adopted innovative philosophies and strategies for educating the children with special needs. Some noted NGO's in this field are – Samadhan (Delhi), Spastic*

*societies (Bombay, Bangalore), the National Association for the Blind etc.*

*Key Words : Mainstream, Disabilities, Special needs.*

### **Introduction :**

The concept of Inclusive Education has been spelt out in the Salamanca statement and the framework for action on special needs education in 1994. It states that all government have been urged to "adopt as a matter of law or policy, the principle of inclusive education enrolling all children in regular schools unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise."

According to the draft scheme on inclusive education prepared by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (2003) "Inclusive Education means all learners, young people with or without disabilities being able to learn together in ordinary pre-school provisions, school and community educational setting with appropriate network of support services."

Inclusive Education means the process of educating children special educational needs alongside their peers in the main stream school.

The concept of inclusive education is a widely accepted one and since it serves the concept of education for all, the task of its expansion is worked out by the various civil societies and the NGOs.

In India, the NGOs have been playing an active role for the development of the people with disabilities since the early 1950s when parents of children with disabilities started special schools to meet the needs of their own children in the rural underdeveloped areas.

### **Objectives of the study :**

Since the concept of inclusive education has become one of the important components of the contemporary issues of education, the in-depth study into the objectives of studying the inclusive

education has become the need of the hour. The following objectives have been taken into consideration in the case of the present context of study:

- i. To know the various ins and outs of inclusive education.
- ii. To make a comprehensive study into the roles of the NGOs and the Civil Societies for the development of the inclusive education.
- iii. The study also wants to put a focus into the development of the strategies of inclusive education in order to develop non-formal education, in which the NGOs can play a pivotal role.
- iv. This particular study also aims at developing the concept of inclusive education as an innovative one.

#### **Methodology applied in the study :**

In order to find out a clear picture of the various activities undertaken by the NGOs, the application of both the primary and the secondary sources of data have been realised.

The primary sources of data including the gist of the discussion held between the researcher and the officials of the concerned NGOs.

The sources of the secondary data are the learners, the periodicals etc.

A good number of reference books have been consulted while undertaking the particular study, in the form of secondary data. The descriptive method has been applied with the data analysis.

#### **Role of Civil Societies, NGOs towards Inclusive education :**

The idea of inclusive education is gaining ground across the globe and the UNESCO was the first international body and the civil society that put strong opinion in favour of expansion of the inclusive education in the year 1994 in the world conference on special needs education. (Spain).

Inclusive education is the process of increasing the participation of students in the cultures, curricula and communities of local

mainstream schools. It is concerned with reducing all exclusionary pressures, difficulty, race, gender, class, family structure, locality and life-style.

In the present context of "EDUCATION AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT", the development of inclusive education should be given a very special status which aims at removing all physical, social and attitudinal barriers. It is very much obvious that all children should share equal value and status and it is the very particular essence of democratic education.

Inclusive education is the need of the hour because of the following reasons :

- Inclusion provides opportunity for social interaction for children with special needs. Since these children constitute an important part of the society, the NGOs can play an important role in this regard.
- Inclusion teaches students that all people are equally valued members of the school and society.
- It creates an atmosphere of trust and respect as students learn that differences enrich learning and that all have valuable contribution to make towards the development of the society.

In the particular societal aspect, the NGOs and the Civil Societies can play the vital role.

It is to be noted that full inclusion prepares all children for the roles that will play in the mainstream society after finishing their schooling.

Inclusive education brings a school closer to the community.

In the year 1994, the UNESCO made the following observation regarding the inclusive education. Inclusive education promotes child-to-child learning and participation of parents and community in planning and execution of services for children in general and disabled children in particular.

In India the NGOs have been playing a significant role in the provision of services for the people with disabilities since the early 1950s when parents of children with disabilities started special schools

and parents organisations to meet the needs of their own children.

The policy programmes of the NGOs can be taken into consideration according to the following aspects

- Establishment of information sharing network of allies working in the same field.
- To introduce the programme in a small way and developing it incrementally.
- Within the limits of vision and mission, allow flexibility to introduce new ideas and close redundant operations.
- Expand operations in the related areas after gaining sufficient experiences rather than expanding too fast to unrelated areas.
- Introducing the strategies to carefully fulfill the short-term needs of the community with regard to rehabilitation while emphasising the long-term needs simultaneously.
- Clarify the level of participation expected from the community right from the beginning of the programme, and develop a strategy to achieve it based on the capacity of different community groups.

A number of NGOs have adopted innovative philosophies and strategies for educating children with disabilities, primarily through encouraging the use of an integrated and inclusive approach. The National association for the blind working in various states, Ramkrishna Vidyalaya in Tamil Nadu and the Blind People association in Ahmedabad have developed teacher training programmes and learning materials. In the area of mental retardation and cerebral palsy, the spastic societies in Bombay, Bangalore etc. have made significant contributions by developing innovative approaches to providing areas to services for a number of children with disabilities.

The Sajjan Rao Vidya Samastha in Bangalore started the first inclusive school to bring in children with mental handicaps from the urban slums. Large scale programmes are run in close collaboration with the Central and the state Governments. As a broad policy, the Government is promoting the role of NGOs at all levels with a view to

achieving participatory development, and supporting the administration in implementing its programme.

One of the noted programmes meant for the development of inclusive education is "CRY" (CHILDREN REHABILITATION AND YOU). This particular programme aims at the development of individual consciousness in the domain of one's role in the expansion of inclusive education.

In the recent step of educational development, the SSA has initiated a programme under the title "CWSN" (CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS) all over the country, under which children having either mental or physical inabilities, are treated with special care by keeping pace with the main stream schooling.

In this type of educational initiative, children get freed from fear and they get chance to develop understanding and respect. Through this children without special needs can learn a good deal about tolerance, individual differences and human exceptionality by interacting with those having special needs.

Through this sort of programme, the normal students can learn that students with special needs have many positive characteristics and abilities.

In the year 2005, a comprehensive "plan of Action for children and youth with disabilities" presented by the Ministry of Human Resource Development clearly advocated inclusive education by envisaging all schools as "disabled friendly" by 2020. This has been followed by the recent arrival of a much needed policy named "The national Policy for persons with disabilities" in February 2006 for the caring education and rehabilitation of its disabled population with an assurance of providing free and compulsory education to all children with disabilities upto the minimum age of 18 years by emphasizing a need for mainstreaming them through inclusive education.

According to Varsha Hooja, a trustee and director at the Spastics society of India now called ADAPT (ABLE DISABLED ALL PEOPLE TOGETHER), 'Inclusive education is merely good education, it looks at the attributes and needs of each child which what all good schools



should undertake”.

The Kothari Commission, 1964 recommended for sending the CWSN in the main stream school. Through the Integrated Education of Disabled Child (IEDC) scheme, the Govt. of India made an attempt for “Integrated Education” of CWSN in 1974.

The scheme of IEDC was revised in the year 1992 and 100% assistance was provided to the schools involved in the policy of integration of students with disabilities.

The scheme of inclusive education for Disabled at secondary stage was launched in the period 2009-2010 by the Govt. of India enabling all students with disabilities for completing secondary schooling in an inclusive environment. This scheme replaced IEDC scheme. However the IEDSS has been subsumed under the RMSA since the year 2013.

In the context of the National phenomena, the role of the NGOs can be taken into consideration with the help of the following study relating to the activities undertaken by the “SPASTICS SOCIETY OF INDIA” or “ADAPT” (ABLE DISABLED ALL PEOPLE TOGETHER)

Here is a glance regarding its project activities : “inclusive education : Practice in Early childhood in Mumbai (funded by UNICEF)”

- Working with 6000 households for the purpose of inclusion in Pre-school education
- Conducted study on 600 children
- Establishing the inclusive ANGANWADIS (Child Care Centres)
- It also included the girl child and socio-economical disadvantaged children.

The “SAMODHAN” in Delhi is a Pioneer in the field of treating the patients with the problem of mental health. According to the recently conducted survey by this particular organisation it has already covered 15 schools run by either the State Government or the private schools. According to B. C. Sahni, the Chairperson of the NGO, “A stimulating early children education and caring environment gives a head start to

all children, including children with disability. Let us collaborate to build an inclusive society, beginning with the early years”.

The scenario of Inclusive Education in North East India, according to the 2011 Census report is listed below.

Sl. No.	Name of the State	PWD of age group 5 - 9 yrs	PWD of age group 10 - 19 yrs	No. of schools for inclusive education	Enrolment of PWD by 2013-2014
1.	Assam	35,211	76,681	1,256	5,030
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	2,082	5,026	92	598
3.	Nagaland	1,937	4,631	58	322
4.	Manipur	3,973	9,107	147	560
5.	Mizoram	988	2,219	216	809
6.	Tripura	4,114	9,764	287	708
7.	Meghalaya	4,459	9,624	54	148
8.	Sikkim	716	2,014	34	68

*Courtesy : RMSA (MHRD - Government of India) Census-2011*

From the given data of the North-East, it is seen that Assam has topped the list in case of inclusion and the number of schools meant for the inclusive education is very less in comparison to the cases of inclusion where as the enrolment is also very much less. But Mizoram, being the highest literate state, has the significant enrolment of 809 during the period 2013-14 though the number of inclusion is not much significant.

In view of the present circumstances, the NGO involvement in Assam needs to be evaluated.

The AXOM SARBASHIKSHA ABHIJAN MISSION (ASSAM) is a programme that places a special focus on the groups with special needs. It deals with the educational needs of the CWSN. This calls for a provision of planning in partnership with the Civil Societies Group, which already exist. Thus, state SSA has taken up the initiatives to reach out to CWSN with special focus in collaboration with the local NGOs.

The state SSA Mission Society with the NGO partnership strategy used the creditable special education centres as resource organisation. These organisations were first given a basic orientation on inclusive education as that they could develop necessary skills to

work in this area.

The involvement of the NGO in the programme served the following purposes:

- Creating awareness about SSA in the community at large.
- Strengthening ties between the Govt. and the NGOs through convergence.

The NGOs serve the purpose of mass participation in the general sense. The main tasks of the NGOs are as follows :

- Conducting the survey and proper identification in order to get the primary data.
- Compilation of the data on CWSN after survey and functional assessment. The work of functional assessment is undertaken in order to assess the function of the NGOs.
- Helping placement of children in general schools.
- To make collaboration with the Anganawadi Workers at ECCE/EGS Centres.
- Creating awareness and the sensitization of community.
- To assist the resource teachers in this regard.
- Conducting training of general teachers of primary schools.
- In case of children with severe disabilities, make necessary referrals access to special schools and other services etc.
- Co-ordinate, the activities of the departments like social welfare, health, rehabilitation and other voluntary agencies working in the field.
- To establish network with the department of welfare, health and other related institutions to provide required aid and appliances.
- To provide resource support to the school and teachers through resource teachers and Gaon Panchayat volunteers.
- Submit monthly and quarterly report to SMO.

In the context of Assam, each NGO was entrusted with a maximum of 2 blocks only, to begin with. All possible support for implementation of inclusion in these blocks only provided by SSA. The noted NGOs working in this field are as follows :

**Phase I**

Sl. No.	Name of the NGO	District	Blocks	No. of CWSN covered
1	Assam Mental Welfare Society	Nalhari	Pub-Nalbari	400
2	Mrinal Jyoti	Dibrugarh	Joypur and Ten-gaklat	750
3	Asha deep	Lakhimpur	Narayanpur and Bihpuria	881
4	NER Multi-purpose Handi-cap school	Dhemaji	Dhemaji and Bodo-land	1578
5	Mon Vikash Kendra Dristi-dam Ashadeep	Kamrup	Rangiya and Boko, Hajo and Karara, Dumoria and Rani	858604659
6	Voluntary Health Association of Assam and Upper Assam Handicapped Centre	Golaghat	East and West South	1425520

**Phase II**

Sl. No.	Name of the NGO	District	Blocks	No. of CWSN covered
1	NER Multi-purpose school and training Centre	Sonitpur Biswanath Chariali	B. Chariali and Behali	857
2	Handicaps Multi development society	Barpeta	Barpeta and Bhaw-anipur	485
3	Upper Assam handicapped centre	Golaghat	North Block	200
4	Sreemanta Sankar Mission	Nagaon	Khagarijan and Rupahi	1111

The data based presentation of the NGO activities have shown that the activities undertaken by the NGOs is very praiseworthy. The number of (CWSN covered under these activities is also highly satisfactory.

The NRHM (Assam Circle) is also of the opinion that mental health is a serious problem of the society and it has also studied that drug addiction is a root cause of this problem. In the view of this it has already taken stern steps to identify the case of drug addiction and the solution.

We have tried our level best to throw light into the activities of the following NGOs that belong to Lunding (Nagaon), which are as follows :

**Ghoroa :** Ghoroa started its activities related to the solution of mental health problems in collaboration with ASHADEEP. In its endeavour it found out the following causes of mental disorder:

- Depression
- Mental disorder and dissatisfaction
- Alcoholic Consumption
- Domestic corruption and Violence
- Economic Disorder

It for the first time detected 75 nos. of persons, suffering from mental disorder, out of which 30 nos. were women, who became the patient due to domestic violence due to alcoholic consumption. It organised camps etc for its solution

**Renaissance :** Renaissance is a newly established NGO, which is working at the grass root curing the problem of drug addiction. It is organising anti-drug campaign in collaboration with the Lunding State Hospital. The Renaissance has particular plan to set up a rehabilitation centre at Lunding in collaboration with local administration. It makes regular contacts with the housewives, family members, neighbours in order to create public awareness for the solution of drug-addiction, which is the root cause of all sorts of mental disorder.

### Conclusion :

The process of inclusion is a serious problem which has seriously threatened the existence of education for all. The problem can be better handled by the NGOs and the Civil Society. The inclusive educational practices inside the institution can be made successful if the community involvement is done with the roles of the NGO and the Civil Societies. If it is so, then only we can achieve something glorious for the future. The roles exercised by the NGOs and the civil societies can make inclusive education an important trend of contemporary education.

### Acknowledgement :

We pay our sincere thanks to the following persons who have helped us a lot in undertaking the study :

- i. Sri Ashis Dey – Chairperson (Ghoroa)
- ii. Dr. Rabishwar Ghosh – Chairperson (Renaissance), Lunding Civil Hospital.
- iii. Shri Tuhin Das – Social Activist - Renaissance

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# **Inclusive Education and Montfort School : A Case Study**

■ Rosy Deka ■ Dr. Jonali Mudoj ■ Lalita Adhikary

## **ABSTRACT**

*Every one belongs to the school.  
Everyone is welcome to the school.*

*Inclusive education refers to the inclusion of children with special needs in a regular school. Removing the psychological, physical, emotional, educational and social barriers is essential. It is based on the philosophy that a child with disability must have equal opportunities and rights to be educated and mingle with the other children and in the main stream society.*

*Montfort inclusive Education Complex, Guwahati, is an educational institution which has started inclusive education in the year 2002 by admitting Deaf, Blind and other children with special needs. In this paper an attempt has been made to study about the inclusive education of Montfort School, Guwahati.*

**Key Words :** *Inclusive education, Montfort School.*

### **Introduction :**

The term inclusion is directed to the verbal form, "to include" which is defined as to have as a part; contain in addition to other parts or to put in with something or someone else; take in or considered as part of a group.

In education "inclusion" refers to the placement and education

and children with disabilities in regular education, classrooms with children of the same age who don't have disabilities.

Inclusive education gives a message :

"Everyone belongs to the school.

Everyone is welcome to the school."

The goal of inclusive education is to ensure that all children, regardless of any individual differences they may have are fully included in the mainstream of life. Inclusion is the provision of services and supplementary aids for both children and teachers.

Inclusion does not mean 'dumping' children with special needs into regular classroom. We have to accept their diversity, respect their individuality, create opportunities for their participation in all activities of the school and provide support to both children and teacher so that children can realize their full potential and teachers will be able to improve their performances. Thomas (1997) has defined inclusion as the acceptance of all pupils in the mainstream system, taught with a common framework and identified as the responsibility of all teachers.

Inclusion is a term which can be defined as an attitude or a commitment of appreciating diversities and accepting that all children can be educated in a common school to their maximum potential – it requires increasing capacity of regular schools so that they can respond creatively to gather diversities. It also involves building capacities of teachers to deal with diverse population of student and to acquire pedagogical competencies that facilitate the learning of all students in their class room (Julka, 2001).

Lindsay (2003) has very rightly stated "It (Inclusive education) is championed as a means to remove barriers, improve outcomes and remove discrimination. Inclusion is however a complex concept and its manifestation in practice are many and various".

An inclusive school is a place where everyone belongs, is accepted, supports and is supported by his or her peers and other member of the school community in the course having his or her educational needs met (Stainback, Stainback & Forest, 1989). Inclusive schooling is the process of opening a classroom or school or a

supportive community where the needs of all members are met and people support and accept responsibility for each other.

#### **Justification of inclusive Education :**

The justification of inclusive education can be discussed in terms of benefit to students, teachers and society. From the students point of view, in inclusive classroom all children are enriched by having the opportunity to learn from one another, grow to care for one another, and gain the attitudes, skills and values necessary for our communities. When proper arrangements are present, inclusion works for all students with and without disabilities in terms of mutually held positive attitudes, gains in academic and social skills and preparation for living in the community.

Apart from positive attitudes, researches have repeatedly shown the tremendous benefits that children gain from socialization with their peers during school year. Children learn many academic skills as well as daily life, communication and social skill, through sustained interaction with their peers.

Inclusive education has also benefits to teachers. The concept of school in our evolving society is changing and teacher must acquire new skills in working with student who are academically and socially disadvantaged. In inclusive education teacher have the opportunity to plan and conduct the affair of education as part of a team. Inclusive schools allow collaboration and consultation among teachers and this provides psychological support to them. Peer collaboration and consultation help teacher to improve their professional capabilities. Inclusive schooling provides opportunity to teachers to participate in decision-making and shaping the daily life of the school.

By far the most important reason for inclusive schooling is the social value of equality. Students are taught that despite of differences all have the equal rights. In contrast to the past experience of segregation, inclusion reinforces the practice of the idea that differences are accepted and respected.

#### **Montfort Inclusive School :**

Montfort Inclusive School named after Saint Louis Marielyrion de Montfort (31<sup>st</sup> January, 1673 - 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1716) was a French Roman Catholic Priest and Confessor. Montfort English School at Guwahati follows the philosophy of Inclusive Education.

Total education which implies a holistic approach to education and which is concerned with the total development of an individual, as a person, is the quintessence of Montfortian education. It aims at developing the body, mind and spirit to the great extent.

Society of Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, who manage these institution were found by St. Louis De Montfort in France in 1705. Since then, it has spread to thirty countries and is engaged in the mission of education. 'Education' is a very wide connection. The organization therefore caters to the educational needs of not only children and youth in normal academic school but also imparts technical education, education of deaf, the dumb and the blind, the physically and mentally handicapped and engages in village uplift and social works especially among the downtrodden and the marginalized. Montfortian education chooses for the total development of the young. They are helped to discover their God given talents work towards their fullest development in order to place them at the service of the society. It seeks to enable the young to search for the truth by training them to analyse reality, from critical judgements, search for solution and work out a synthesis.

Montfort Inclusive School Complex, situated at 10<sup>th</sup> mile Guwahati, Assam was established on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1996. It is affiliated to the CBSE Delhi. The school started inclusive education in year 2002 by admitting Deaf, Blind and other children with special needs. They are provided with all the necessary equipment, specially trained staff and TLMs. The school is truly an example of National Integration as it has students from 26 states of India.

This year there are 52 hearing impaired and 30 visually impaired children studying along with more than 1400 regular students from Nursery to Class XII. The disabled children who are from far away

places, stay in the hostel attached to the school that has over 200 non-disabled boys and girls.

The regular children get ample opportunities to interact with the disabled. They help them in many ways – academically and in co-curricular activities. Under the watchful eyes of caring staff, all the children get excellent opportunity to develop lasting life values and the full development of their innate talents and skills. The school has a unique motto “touching minds, teaching values.”

The hearing impaired children are helped very much by their hearing peers both academically and in other ways. They exceed in all the co-curricular activities especially in sports and games and other competition.

It is heartening to note that the teachers of the school are taking special effort to learn Braille and sign language to help the Deaf and Blind students in their class. The Disabled children are helped by the non-disabled not only academically but in mobility, communication, sports and games and in all the programmes of the hostel and school.

The findings at Montfort school are summarized as follows –

- Montfort Inclusive Education Complex 10<sup>th</sup> Mile, Guwahati.
- The motto of the school is ‘touching minds teaching value’.
- Montfort Higher Secondary School – Over 1400 regular children.
- School for the Deaf – 52 Hearing impaired children in an inclusive set up.
- School for blind children – 30 visually impaired children are fully integrated with the sighted children.
- Montfort Diagnostic Centre and infant screening centre Radiological services for the children infant in collaboration with AYSNIHH, Mumbai-50.
- Secondary Teacher Education Programme, Teacher of the Hearing impaired.
- Montfort Inclusive hostels-over 200 boys and girls from the 26 states of India and the children with disabilities in a fully inclusive set up.

- Extra classes are arranged for special student to cope-up with the course.
- At present 6 specially trained teachers are there for H.I. and 1 (one) for the V.I. Montfort centre for education at Tura provides Diploma Course in Teaching the special children for 2 years.
- Fee structure is same for all the students.
- Remuneration is also same for all the teachers. Because teachers take it as a service to the special child and don't demand for extra remuneration.

#### Facilities :

**Laboratory :** Laboratory facilities for the subjects Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics and Computer are available for the students to develop practical knowledge.

**Library :** A well furnished Library with over 5000 titles.

#### Multiple Auditorium :

#### Digital Class rooms :

200 mts. Track, Football court, Basket Ball court.

- Attitude of normal students towards the special children are very supportive.
- No special caretaker are employed to take care of the special children. Teachers and normal students take it as their sacred duty to extend cooperation and support to those special children.
- Special children are also encouraged to have their dignity and arouse their self respect and self confidence.

#### Challenges :

Though much has changed since the days of the first Brothers who came to the North East, life has still throws up many challenges. Problems that the first batch of Brothers encountered continue to torment. The language and culture barriers remain as a hurdle even

today. Doubts and setbacks continue to bother them. Lack of vision and commitment shows itself in self-destructive attitudes. In spite of these odds there is the hope in the minds of the brothers that one day, they will break free and set out like apostles, always ready for action, always prepared to suffer any trial with freedom of the Lord Jesus Himself (Montfort Prayer).

#### **Conclusion :**

In conclusion it can be said that the Montfort School of Guwahati is one of the few educational institutions in the country which has been providing inclusive education following the message of St. Louis Montfort "Those whom the world rejects, must move you most." And thus making a sincere effort inspite of the challenges that comes in its way to illumine the lives of many and to bring hope, abundance and prosperity in their life.

But this is not enough. The overall picture indicates that though the practice and policy in special needs education have improved over time and the attitude of society towards the differently abled children has changed over the centuries, yet much slowly and still much remains to be done.

There is an estimation of 600 million persons with one form of disability or the other all over the world and 10 percent of this number is estimated to be in India that means we have 60 million persons with disability. 97 percent of disabled children in developing countries are without any form of rehabilitation. 98 percent of disabled children are without any education. A recent article by Kenneth Eklindh of UNESCO states - more than 90 percent disabled children in developing countries are not in school.

Further the estimated figure about disabled children in our country are really horrifying. We cannot ignore this segment of our population while planning for education, development and employment. Because, the society is the sum total of all the individuals, not only of the normal human being. So, if the society is to progress in the path of welfare, care is to be taken for all.

People must accept, respect and appreciate each other's background. For this, we need more schools that promote wider acceptance, peace and co-operation. In this mission, the Montfort School of Guwahati definitely serving as a great inspiration to all.

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## **Challenges and Strategies of Inclusive Education in India with Special Reference to North-East India**

■ Pradip Kumar Das      ■ Biswajit Roy

### **ABSTRACT**

*Education is the right of every child because it equips him to meet the challenges of life. The children with disabilities (CWD) need this all the more, to supplement their differential talents so that they can prepare themselves for a happy, productive and useful life. Efforts to educate children with disabilities began soon after independence in India. An attempt has been made to examine the policies and legislations for educating the children with disabilities in India after post- constitution era. Children with disabilities who experience difficulties in learning are often marginalized and excluded from the school system. This is in spite of the fact that there have been number of attempts to create awareness about inclusion through many of the major governmental programmes. This is especially true since the year 1994 onwards when India became signatory to the Salamanca Statement and committed itself to promote the inclusion of children and youth in mainstream educational institutions. The problem of integrated education to meet the special needs of children with disabilities is more severe in north eastern region of the country. Living in one of India's most remote and underprivileged regions, the majority of people with disabilities in Northeast India do not have access to services that can support their rehabilitation or inclusion*

*into society. The present paper attempts to present the extent of implementation of inclusive education for the children with disabilities in the North Eastern states of India along with the problems and probable strategies of inclusive education in this region.*

**Key Words:** *Inclusive Education, Children with Special Needs, Children with disabilities, North East India, Mainstream schools.*

### **Introduction :**

The term 'inclusive education' stands for an educational system that includes a large diversity of pupils and which differentiates education for this diversity. Inclusive education happens when children with and without disabilities participate and learn together in the same classes. Inclusive education means that all children, regardless of their ability level, are included in a mainstream classroom, or in the most appropriate or least restrictive environment, that students of all ability levels are taught as equals, and that teachers must adjust their curriculum and teaching methodologies so that all students benefit. Research shows that when a child with disabilities attends classes alongside peers who do not have disabilities, good things happen. For decades special schools have been the pivot of the education of pupils with special needs. In quite a number of countries in the Western world, educators and administrators have put a great deal of efforts into the development of a thorough and widely accepted system of special schools. In these schools all the available expertise has been concentrated in an attempt to educate pupils with special needs in the best way. These schools were treated as separate and independent schools because of the provision of unusual and special instruction in these school. Since 1920s the seperate system for special education has been enlarged and refined.

The view of special education and the system of special education of pupils with special needs has changed gradually to a system of inclusive education. Knowledge, expertise and facilities are still of importance to the education of pupils with special needs, but



the segregation of these pupils is now perceived as unacceptable. The prevailing view is that they should be educated together with their peers in regular education settings. The consequence is that regular and special education as separate systems disappear and are replaced by a single system that includes a wide range of pupils. In such an 'inclusive' system all pupils attend in principle the same school. Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. The system of inclusive education provides an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the first time in 1970 recommended "inclusive education as a cheap alternative" to other special education programs, specifically for developing countries. The UN made 1981 as the year of disabled person and the discussion generated by this year of disabled person resulted in adoption of UN Resolution by the general assembly on the 3rd of December, 1982.

Paragraph 120 of the World Programme of Action stipulates that education should, as far as possible, be within the ordinary school system, without any discrimination against handicapped children or adults. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 10% of any population are disabled. In addition, approximately 85% of the world's children with disabilities under 15 live in developing countries. With the adoption of the Salamanca Statement in 1994 (UNESCO) a large number of developing countries have reformulated their policies to promote the inclusion of Child with Special Needs (CWSN) into mainstream schools.

Though a large number of developed countries like USA, Canada, Australia, have policies/laws for promotion of "inclusive education," a number developing countries like India continue to provide educational services to students with disabilities in "segregated schools" till recent times.

### **Inclusive Education in India :**

Although the World Program of Action was written for all countries, much of what it says applies to India. Because Paragraph 120 maintains that the recommendations of inclusive education are often not always acted upon because of societal prejudices, ranging from those of administrators and teachers, to those of parents and children. The presence of such societal prejudices can be seen in India which manifest themselves into societal obstacles for people with disabilities.

The Kothari Commission, 1964, recommended for sending the Child with Special Needs (CWSN) in the mainstream school. Through the Integrated Education of Disabled Child (IEDC) Scheme, Government of India made an attempt for "integrated education" of CWSN in 1974. In India, Education of children with disabilities has moved from special schools to integrated education. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment implemented a national level central government sponsored scheme called Integrated Education of Disabled Children (IEDC) in 1980s. The scheme was apparently intended to encourage co-operation between mainstream and special schools in order to support integration. Further the IEDC Scheme stressed for the retention of CWSN in the regular school system. The National Policy on Education 1986 continued the spirit of IEDC Scheme and stated "mild disabilities should be included in the mainstream classroom". However the IEDC scheme was to be revised in 1992 due to some shortcomings in the scheme. Under the revised scheme 100% assistance was made available to schools involved in the "integration" of students with disabilities. Section 4.9 of The National Policy on Education (NPE) – 1986, clearly focuses on the needs of children with disabilities. "The objective should be to integrate the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence."

Further Section 26 of the Person with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act, 1995

suggested for providing free education to CWSN in India.

Although the goals and objectives of the IEDC program were praiseworthy, the number of children with disabilities enrolled was woefully small. In spite of 100 per cent financial provisions being provided under the scheme of IEDC for integrating learners with special needs in the system, only 2-3 per cent of the total population of these learners were actually integrated into the regular school. Jaluka and Singal argues that the programme is seen as an overall failure by those outside the government.

IEDC has been replaced by the Integrated Education for the Disabled (IED) — a component of the national District Primary Education Project (DPEP), to support in-service teacher training, architectural design in schools, establishment of resource centres, teacher training, identification and assessment of children with disabilities, and the supply of specialist aids and appliances.

In 1987, UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) in collaboration with the NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) launched the Project on Integrated Education for Disabled (PIED) in 10 development blocks in 10 States and Union Territories across the nation that focused on teacher training in order to encourage integration. The PIED was later amalgamated with the DPEP and SSA and by 2002 extended to 27 States.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner. Though the concept of inclusive education is widely used in government documents, including the literature of the DPEP and of its successor SSA, there is a lack of clarity and confusion around the concepts of 'integrated' and 'inclusive' education and 'special education needs'. Although one of the official objectives of the SSA is the enrolment of children with disabilities, the World Bank does not list disability as a key indicator, unlike gender, SC and ST. This shows that the programme SSA is lagging far behind the achievement of its intended targets.

The Scheme of Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary

Stage (IEDSS) was launched in 2009-2010 by Government of India enabling all students with disabilities for completing secondary schooling (classes IX to XII) in an inclusive environment. This scheme replaced the IEDC Scheme. However the IEDSS was subsumed under Rastriya Madhyamik Sikshya Abhiyan (RMSA) since 2013.

#### **Inclusive Education in North-East India :**

As per the census of 2011, there are 2,68,10,557 Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in India constituting 2.21% of total population of the country. Of the total number of PWD in the country 1,72,546 (0.64 %) live in eight North Eastern states of India. The non-availability of sufficient qualified professionals for the evaluation of PWDs in North East has badly affected the enumeration of PWDs in the region. Thus it has become very difficult to quantify how many PWDs in the age groups of 5-9 years and 10-19 years are actually mild, moderate or profound. The enrolment of Child with Special Needs (CWSN) in the mainstream schools of North Eastern region is explained in the table below.

The table below reveals that Assam homes highest number of PWD (64.85%) followed by Meghalaya (8.16%), Tripura (8.04%), Manipur (7.58%) and Arunachal Pradesh (4.12%). Since the PWD Act 1995 advocates for free education of CWSN up to the age of 18 years hence the age groups from 5-9 and 10-19 have been considered in this write up.

Table: Enrolment of Child with Special Needs in the mainstream schools of North Eastern region

Sl. No.	Name of the State	PWD of Age Group 5-9 years	PWD of Age Group 10-19 years	Total No. of PWD of age group 5-19	No. of schools for Inclusive Education	Enrolment of PWD by 2013-2014
1	2	3	4	(3+4) =5	6	7
1	Assam	35,211 (31.47)	76,681 (68.53)	111,892(100)[64.85]	1256	5,030[4.50][61.02]
2	Arunachal Pradesh	2,082 (29.29)	5,026 (70.71)	7,108(100)[4.12]	92	598(8.41)[7.26]
3	Nagaland	1,937 (29.49)	4,631 (70.51)	6,568(100)[3.81]	58	322[4.90][3.91]
4	Manipur	3,973 (30.37)	9,107 (69.63)	13,080(100)[7.58]	147	560[4.28][6.79]
5	Mizoram	988 (30.81)	2219 (69.19)	3,207(100)[1.86]	216	809[25.23][9.81]
6	Tripura	4,114 (29.64)	9,764 (70.36)	13,878(100)[8.04]	287	708[5.10][8.59]
7	Meghalaya	4,459 (31.66)	9,624 (68.34)	14,083(100)[8.16]	65	148[1.05][1.80]
8	Sikkim	716 (26.23)	2,014 (73.77)	2,730(100)[1.58]	34	68[2.49][0.82]
Total	North East India	53,480 (30.99)	1,19,066 (69.01)	1,72,546(100)	2,155	8,243[4.78][100]

Notes: Figures in parenthesis () represents the percentage to the row total upto fifth column  
 Figures in parenthesis {} represent percentage of enrolment of PWD of age group 5-19  
 Figures in parenthesis [] represent percentage to total of column no. 5 &7

Source: Census Report 2011 & RMSA, Ministry of Human Resources, Govt. of India Reports

The coverage of Children with Special needs in the mainstream schools in the North Eastern states has not been found to be at satisfactory level so far. During the year 2013-14, only 4.78% of the total number of PWD of the age group 5-19 in North Eastern region were enrolled in the mainstream schools for inclusive education. The Government of India has approved to cover 2,11,616 CWSN under the IEDSS Scheme in the year 2014-2015 out of which 46,122 are from North East. But there are few challenges which affects adversely the process of introducing the inclusive education system in North East.

#### Challenges to implement integrated education :

Lack of trained personnel and of flexible curriculum is considered to be one of the important challenges to the inclusive education system in North East. The majority of school employees are not trained to design and implement educational programs for CWSN in regular schools. Evidences reveal that all the states of North East do not have sufficient trained/qualified personnel to teach CWSN. Further the non-flexible "curriculum and evaluation method" is also found to be a challenge to the system.

Architectural barrier hinders the process of integration of PWDs in the mainstream schools. Though provisions have been made under the PWD Act 1995 for creation of architectural barrier free environment for the PWDs, those are hardly executed in full in most part and it has adverse effect on the integration of CWSN in the regular education system.

Aside of this, a large number of CWSN live in families with income below poverty. The combination of poverty and disability

results in a condition of "immediate deprivation" which sets up challenges to the participation of CWSN in regular schooling. The reciprocity of poverty producing disability, and disability resulting in poverty creates unique challenges for the integrated education movement in North East India. The combination of poverty and disability results in a condition of "simultaneous deprivation". This is a syndrome that sets up barriers to the participation of persons with disabilities in the normal routines and activities of the community, including regular schooling. Motivating poor families, with all the associated costs to send their child with disabilities to school, is proving to be a big challenge.

Attitudes of the non-disabled are proving to be a major barrier in the social integration of persons with disabilities. The prejudiced mind setup of the parents of the non-disabled child that disability is disease and it can be spread to their child if mix up with CWSN is a major hurdle in the process. The more severe and visible the deformity is, the greater is the fear of contagion.

The parents and school personnel are largely unaware of the recent legislation passed by Indian Parliament. They are also not aware of funding available to include students with disabilities in regular schools. Thus, unless people, especially parents of children with disabilities and school personnel, are made knowledgeable about the various provisions enshrined in the Act, the Central and State Governments commitment to providing integrated education will be in vain.

Effective training on disabilities has to be provided to the teachers to make the inclusive education system success. The majority of school personnel in North East are not trained to design and implement educational programmes for students with disabilities in regular schools. The school personnel fail to get adequate training to work in integrated settings. The number of trained special education teachers is extremely small considering the number of children with disabilities that require their services.

Deficiency of resources also hinder the successful implementation of integrated practices in schools. Most of the schools in India are

poorly designed and few are equipped to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. The lack of disability friendly transportation services and accessible buildings are considered by some to be far greater problems than social prejudice and negative attitudes. Both the Central and State governments will have to provide increased resources to this aspect of education to implement integrated education successfully.

The North Eastern region is a multilingual, multicultural, multireligious region, and its people are stratified along sharp socio-economic and caste lines. It is one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse regions in Asia. Therefore, unless the challenges are carefully identified and systematically addressed, inclusion will remain a policy on paper.

**Collaboration between different ministries:** As different ministries are entrusted with the responsibilities of implementing different schemes/policies hence a better coordination among the different ministries will certainly help in achieving desired goals.

#### **Possible strategies to overcome these challenges :**

An effective centre may be formed to collect, and disseminate information through various TV and radio programs as well as through internet on various aspects of disability.

The centre so created may start documentary projects that feature inclusion being implemented in different parts of the region/ country. Such programs are likely to make a positive impact on school educators who often believe that inclusion can work only in developed countries or in other parts of the country.

Suitable measures may be adopted to remove / minimize the variations in the content, process, and examination of existing special education programs in different parts of the country. The Government may periodically evaluate special education programs to ensure that each program meets minimum standards.

To meet the severe shortage of trained teachers it would be necessary to impart training to sufficient number of teachers as special educators with a greater emphasis on integrated education.

Both the Central and State governments will have to provide increased resources to this aspect of education to ensure successful implementation of integrated practices in schools.

Collaboration between different ministries should be ensured for successful implementation of inclusive education. As different ministries are entrusted with the responsibilities of implementing different schemes/policies hence a better coordination among the different ministries will certainly help in achieving desired goals.

Channelizing NGO's in implementing inclusive education programs may improve the situation. Government departments has limitations in execution of certain programs under certain conditions. The involvement of NGOs will certainly be very instrumental in such situation.

Universities may be used in designing curriculums which may help in changing the attitudes of people towards PWDs. In view of the shortages of teacher, distance mode of education may be used. Further flexible "curriculum and evaluation" system may be designed considering the needs of CWSN.

#### Conclusion :

To open up the regular school system to disabled children is not an easy task. A big gap exists between this ideal situation and the present reality. There is an urgent need for interventions for equipping general teachers with special skills, making general curricula, teaching methods. This will strengthen inclusive education and will give more children with disabilities the chance to go to school in this region. It is important to have a holistic, comprehensive and inter-sectoral approach where all pieces are put together. It is not enough to present and implement one part only. However, with the implementation of various Acts and Policies (PWD Act, 1995, RTE Act, 2009, National Policy for Children 2013 etc.) the inclusive education has started gaining momentum. The success of the inclusive education system, in fact, will depend on how educators and educational systems work together. We must find hope for children with disabilities. The choice is entirely ours.

When we talk of integration and inclusion we talk of the efforts to give the best education within the diversity, remembering that social skills and peer relations are the basic foundations for a secure adulthood.

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# **A Study on Challenges of Inclusive Education and its Implementation with special reference to Maligaon Area of Guwahati**

■ **Krishna Ghosh**      ■ **Manoj Kumar Sarmah**

## **ABSTRACT**

*Inclusive education means welcoming all children without discriminating into regular or general schools. 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 happens when children with and without disabilities participate and learn together in the same classes. The idea behind Inclusive education is that students with special needs will be placed in same classroom environment as other students of their age who do not have special needs. But it is not an easy process and requires a lot of struggle and commitment to overcome attitudinal and social barriers. Generally there are different challenges towards Inclusive education could emanate from different directions. We find that majority of employees of educational institutions are not trained to implement the educational programs for children with special needs. Therefore to overcome these challenges, Universities and Government should take effective steps to implement different policies for children with special needs.*

*The objective of this study is to identify the practical challenges and to check the implementation of inclusive education.*

*Key Words: Inclusive education, Challenges, Implementation.*

## **Introduction :**

“Children who learn together, learn to live together-”

Inclusive education means welcoming all children without discriminating into regular or general schools. It means that all students attend and are welcomed by their neighbourhood schools in age-appropriate, regular classes and are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the life of the school. Inclusive education happens when children with and without disabilities participate and learn together in the same classes. For a long time, children with disabilities were educated in separate classes or in separate schools. People got used to the idea that special education meant separate education. But we know that when children are educated together, positive academic and social outcomes occur for all the children involved. Inclusive education acknowledges that all children can learn. It respects the differences of children- age, gender, language etc. It enables education systems and methodologies to meet the needs of all children. The aim of this study was to determine the challenges faced by the educators in implementing Inclusive Education in schools of Maligaon area of Guwahati.

## **Significance of the Study :**

Without eradicating the major problems of Inclusive Education we are not able to achieve the qualitative education for the students with special needs. Therefore, in the present study the investigator tries to identify different problems which comes on the way as a challenge in imparting Inclusive Education. To implement Inclusive Education in a true spirit we need to eradicate the problems that comes in the way.

## **Objectives of the Study :**

Assessing the practical challenges and opportunities for the provision of Inclusive Education in schools of Maligaon area of Guwahati was the general objective of this study. The study will have the following specific objectives:

- To identify the practical challenges of Inclusive Education in schools.
- To check the implementation of inclusive education in the schools.

**Area of the Study :**

The area of the study is confined to six schools of Maligaon area of guwahati namely- Kamakhya Vidyalaya High School, Adarsha Vidyalaya, Netaji Vidyapith Railway H. S. School, Pandu Adarsha High School, Ambikagiri Girls' Higher Secondary School and Lokapriya Bordoloi Vidhalaya. Due to time constraint the investigator has selected only six schools for the identifying the challenges of Inclusive education.

**Statement of the Problem :**

A study on chalenges of inclusive education and its implementation with special reference to maligaon area of Guwahati.

The title is chosen because these schools are facing certain issues regarding implementation of Inclusive Education in Maligaon area of Guwahati. The schools that are taken for the study seem to be a perfect spot to display the challenges and implementation of Inclusive Education.

**Methodology :**

In the present study descriptive survey method has been applied. Descriptive method is that type of method which tries to study the phenomenon in their natural setting concerning their present state of affairs. The present study is based on the quantitative data analysis only. The present study uses simple percentage technique to analyse the collected data.

**Population :**

The population of the present study consists of all the teachers of schools providing Inclusive Education in Maligaon area of Guwahati.

**Sample :**

For the present study 30 school teachers of Maligaon area of Guwahati have been randomly selected to collect the required data.

**Tools :**

In the present study the following self made tools were used for the data collection.

1. Questionnaire.
2. Individual interviews of teacher

**Table - I**

Item analysis of the Responses of the teachers in school of Maligaon  
ares of Guwahati regarding inclusive education.

Item No.	Particulars	No. of Teachers	Yes	Percentage (%)	No	Percentage (%)
1.	Inclusive education promotes successful learning	30	24	80	06	20
2.	Comfortable school compound for students with special needs	30	27	90	03	10
3.	Regarding classroom accessibility for students with special needs	30	27	90	03	10
4.	Opinion of school community towards inclusiveness of students	30	29	96.67	01	3.33
5.	Whether disabled students are stigmatized by normal students	30	28	93.34	02	6.66
6.	Participation of the students with special needs in different school activities	30	30	100	00	00
7.	Provision of special service to the students with special needs	30	30	100	00	00

Item No.	Particulars	No. of Teachers	Yes	Percentage (%)	No	Percentage (%)
8.	Regarding leisure places and washrooms for the students with special needs					
9	Provision of proper sports field	30	05	16.67	25	83.33
10	Regarding interaction between normal students and students with special needs	30	29	96.67	01	3.33
11	Effectiveness of curriculum	30	17	56.67	13	43.33
12	Regarding methodology of teaching	30	04	13.33	26	86.67
13	Government funds	30	00	00	30	100
14	Special teachers for the students with special needs	30	05	16.67	25	83.33
15	Helping members within school	30	01	3.33	29	96.67

#### Analysis :

From the table, it has been found that out of 30 school teachers in Maligaon area of Guwahati, 62.22% of teachers responded as 'yes' and 37.78% of teachers responded as 'no' regarding challenges and implementation of Inclusive education.

Among them in the item no. 1 out of 30 teachers, 80% of teachers agreed that Inclusive education promotes successful learning whereas 20% disagreed with it. Again in the item no. 2 and 3, out of 30 teachers in both the cases, 90% teachers had the opinion that the school compound and the classroom facilities are effective for the students with special needs. On the other hand, 10% of teachers in both the cases did not agree with it.

Again in the item no. 4 and 7 out of 30 teachers, 96.67% and

100% of them responded as 'yes' whereas 3.33% and none of them respectively responded as 'no'. From the above mentioned data we can say that school community believes on inclusiveness and they provide special service to the students with special needs.

In the item no.5 out of 30 teachers 93.34% of teachers agreed that the students with disabilities stigmatized by the students without disabilities.

In item no.6, we found that out of 30 teachers, 100% teachers responded as 'yes' and they agreed that the students with special needs participated in different activities organized by the schools according to their physical and mental abilities.

Again in the items 8 and 9, out of 30 teachers 16.67% of teachers believed that there is dearth of leisure places and washrooms for the students with special needs and 80% of teachers believed that the sports field of the concerned school is comfortable to the students with special needs.

In the item no.10 out of 30 teachers, 96.67% of teachers responded as 'yes' that the students with special needs interact with that of normal students but few teachers felt that they rarely interact with the normal students.

Again in the item no. 11, out of 30 teachers 56.67% teachers agreed that similar curriculum is suitable for both normal and differently abled students. In item no. 12, only 13.33% of teachers agreed that present teaching methodology is effective for both type of students i.e, normal students and special needs students.

In item no. 13, regarding the Government funds out of 30 teachers, 100% of teachers gave their opinion that the schools had not received any grant from the Government.

In items 14 and 15, out of 30 teachers, only 16.67% and 3.33% of teachers said that the schools had special teachers and helping members to take care of the students with special needs. On the other hand, maximum number of teachers i.e, 83.33% and 96.67% had the opinion that schools do not have special teachers and helping members.



**Findings :**

From the study, the following major findings have been found and can be summarized as follows-

- It has been found that Inclusive education promotes successful learning as the students with special needs gets inspiration to learn equally like the normal students.
- Maximum numbers of teachers believed that school compound and classrooms are effective for the children with special needs.
- It has been found that school community believed on the inclusiveness of students with disabilities with the other students and it gives special service to them.
- Most of the teachers felt that students with disabilities are stigmatized by the students without disabilities.
- It has been found that the students with special needs do participate in different types of activities organized by the school.
- Students with disabilities interact with those students without disabilities.
- It has been found that Government do not provide any grants for the upliftment of special needs students.
- Very less number of trained teachers are found in schools to educate the students with special needs.
- It has been found that few helping members are available in schools to take care of disabled students.

**Suggestions :**

To improve the existing trends and practice of teaching students with special needs to address the special educational needs of those children, it requires a collaborative effort of community members, teachers, school principals, governmental agencies etc. The educators' lack of knowledge, little or no experience, uncertainty about roles, inadequate training in teaching learners with barriers in learning and development result in high percentage of educators holding negative

attitude towards inclusion of learners with barriers in learning into regular classrooms. The study revealed that teachers need quality, comprehensive, pre-service and in-service training. Following are some suggestions for implementing Inclusive education in schools.

- For Inclusive Education to be a reality, training needs to be imparted to the teachers, to equip them with the ability to handle the students with special needs as well as to inculcate a positive attitude among the teachers.
- Specially designed teaching aids should be made available to the teachers to cope with the students with special needs.
- A mass scale awareness among parents and society should be initiated, to assure the parents of normal child that their education will not be hampered in any way.
- Different professionals other than teachers, like doctors, specialists, therapists, motivational speakers etc. should be invited in the schools to ensure both the mental and physical health of the students.
- Government funds should be provided to the schools incorporating the special children to meet their special needs.
- The school should ensure the availability of special materials and equipments by allocating special funds to provide service needed for students with special needs.
- Special attention should be offered to students with special needs in the procedures of testing and examination.

**Conclusion :**

The main purpose of this study was to assess the challenges and implementation of Inclusive Education. The concept of Inclusion is most apt in a democratic country like India. There are many challenges on the way of Inclusive education, but if it is properly implemented than Inclusive education will be successful. The success of Inclusive education in any context depend upon many factors. Teachers themselves are an essential component to ensure the quality

of students' inclusion in school environment. Special attention must be paid to ensure that classroom teachers' have the skills and support needed to provide quality education to children with special needs. This requires the collaboration of classroom teachers, school principals, education officers, policy makers etc.

At last we can say that to promote successful Inclusive Education mass awareness is required, teachers of these schools should be properly trained and Government funds should be allotted.

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## **Teachers' and Parents' Attitude on role of Government and NGOs Towards Inclusive Education in Morigaon District of Assam: A Study**

■ Dr. Birat Kumar Panyang ■ Achyut Kumar Das

### ABSTRACT

*Inclusive education is an approach to educating those children who have needs special education for all round drawing of mind, body and spirit. It means for a process of fighting for inclusion of the students with disabilities in the mainstream education system. Inclusive education is based on the right of all children to access a quality education that meets basic learning needs and enriches lives.*

*It is a process of education to all children with and without disabilities through their neighbourhood schools in age, regular classes contribute and participate in all aspects of the life in the school. Children with special needs are able to learn and participate together through special curriculum and co-curricular activities in the school. Inclusive education provides opportunities to all children learning with individual differences, gifts, and appropriate expectations for each child.*

*All learners have the right to live with dignity and self-respect as a human being. Different policies and services have been launched for disabled learner. The constitution of India has directed the state to ensure provision of free inclusive education to all the children up to the age of 14 years.*

*Inclusive education is not an alternative of education but an inevitability of education process. The dream of providing basic education to all children is to ever become a reality when all the concerned professional, grassroots workers, teachers, Government, community members should address the issues of education of children with special needs, especially in rural and remote areas.*

*The present study shall focus on teachers and parents attitude on role of Government and NGO's towards inclusive education in Morigaon district of Assam.*

**Key Words :** *Attitude, Govt., NGO's.*

#### **Introduction :**

Inclusive education is an approach to educate those children who have needs special education for all round drawing of mind, body and spirit. It means for a process of fighting for inclusion of the students with disabilities in the mainstream education system. Inclusive education is based on the right of all children to a quality education that meets basic learning needs and enriches lives.

It is a process of education to all children with and without disabilities through their neighbourhood schools in age, regular classes contribute and participate in all aspects of the life in the school. Children with special needs are able to learn and participate together through special curriculum and co-curricular activities in the school. Inclusive education provides opportunities to all children learning with individual differences, gifts, and appropriate expectations for each child.

All learners have the right to live with dignity and self-respect as a human being. Different policies and services have been launched for disabled learner. The constitution of India has directed the state to ensure provision of free inclusive education to all the children up to the age of 14 years.

The Education Commission of 1964-66 drew attention to the education of children with disabilities. In 1974 Integrated Education

for Disabled Children (IEDC) was launched for development of inclusive education. The Rehabilitation Council of India Act 1992 initiated a training programme for the development of professional response to the needs of students with disabilities. Disability Act in 1996 provided free education to children with disabilities in an appropriate environment until the age of 18 years. In 1999, the government of India passed the National Trust for Welfare of Person with Autism, Cerebral Palsy and Multiple Disabilities Act for the economic rehabilitation of people with disabilities.

In recent trends, numbers of policies have been launched by the government of India for achieving the goals of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and the Sarva Shiksha Abhijan (SSA) in 2002.

Programmes launched by government and initiatives of different NGO's may able to make ensured to participation of children with disabilities in formal education.

#### **Area of the Study :**

The area of the present study is Morigaon district of Assam which is situated in middle part and second smallest district of the state. It is situated in between 26.15' and 26.5' N latitude and between 92'-95.5' E longitude. It is bounded on the North bank of the river Brahmaputra. On the East Nagaon district, on the West Kamrup district and on the South the Karbi-Anlong district. The total area of Morigaon district is 1551 sq.km.

Earlier it was administratively belonging to the undivided Nagaon district. The district has only one civil sub-division, namely Morigaon. It was separated from Nagaon district and became a full-fledged district on 29 September 1989. The present district of Morigaon has five developmental blocks - Mayang, Kapili, Bhurbandha, Moirabari and Laharighat and five revenue circles such as Morigaon sadar, Mikirbeta, Laharighat, Bhuragoan and Mayang. There are three Reserved Forests constituted under Assam Forest Act. These are Sunaikuchi, Khulahat and Bura Mayong. Pabitarā is the only wildlife

sanctuary in the district which is famous for one horned Rhinos with highest density of its population.

Morigaon district has been identified as one of the backward districts of the state, especially in the field of education. The majority of SC/ST and minority community's people are badly affected in terms of education due to poverty and lack of educational facilities. According to 2011 census total population of the district is 9, 57,853, where 4, 85,328 males and 4, 72,525 females and total literacy rate is 69.37%, which is lower than the national and state literacy rate. The male literacy rate is 73.66% and female literacy rate is 64.99%.

#### **Significance of the Study :**

Every child has a right to belong and share normal experience with family, neighbours and peers. Each child has a right to access quality education in his or her school, learn and develop the skills necessary to live and work in the real world.

Leaving behind and neglecting the disabled children is not possible to achieve the goals of universalization of education in the country. Inclusion of children with special needs is essentially the responsibility of the regular education system. Special educational, parents of children with special needs as well as parents of non-disabled peer groups, students without disabilities and the community as a whole have to be empowered for inclusive education successfully. In this regard the government of India has made different policies of education for children with special needs. Morigaon district is literally very poor in comparison to other districts of the state. The poor literacy of the district indicated that a huge number of children including disabilities are deprived from education.

Programmes launched by the Government and initiatives of different NGO's have been able to make only a limited impact in terms of increasing participation of children with disabilities in formal education. Keeping in view an attempt has been made study on Teachers' and Parents' attitude on the role of Government and NGO's towards inclusive education in Morigaon district of Assam.

#### **Objectives of the Study :**

- To study teachers' and parent's attitude on role of Government towards education of disabled children.
- To study teachers' and parents' attitude on role of NGO's towards education of disabled child.

#### **Hypotheses :**

**H<sub>0</sub>1:** There is significant difference in attitude between teachers and parents on Government role towards education of disabled children.

**H<sub>0</sub>2:** There is no significant difference in attitude between teachers and parents on NGO's role towards education of disabled children.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

##### **Research Design :**

The present study adopted the Survey Method. This method is concerned with teachers' and parents' attitude on the role of Government and NGO's towards inclusive education.

##### **Population :**

The population of the study was all school teachers and parents with disabled children in Morigaon district.

##### **Sample :**

The sample of the study comprised of 200 individuals consisting of 136 Teachers and 64 Parents and purposive sampling was used.

##### **Tool used for the study:**

Attitude Scale developed by Dr. Usha Mishra, Department of Education, Allahabad University was used.

##### **Data collection procedure :**

The tool was administered in respective school teachers and parents. The investigators visited all the sampled schools and households of disabled children. The teachers

and parents of disabled children were given oral instruction about the procedure to be followed. After convenient understanding, the teachers and parents were provided the Questionnaire sheet separately. They were asked to read carefully all the items and put the answer given on the space. They were also told to check the questionnaire sheet again that no item was left out.

**Data analysis :**

The collected data were sorted and arranged according to their characteristics. Simple tabulation and frequency arrangements have been done to categories the data so that they could be easily understood. Mean, S.D. and t-test have been used.

**Analysis and Interpretation :**

**Objective 1:** To study teachers' and parents' attitude on role of Government towards education of disabled children

**Hypothesis 1:** There is significant difference of teachers' and parents' attitude towards education of disabled children on Government role.

**Table - 1**

Frequency and Percentage of Teachers' response on Government role towards disabled children education. (N=136)

Score Range	Frequency	%	Level of attitude
100-120	23	16.91	High
70-119	78	57.35	Moderate
40-69	35	25.74	Low

Table-1 shows that 16.91 percent teachers have high attitude on Government role towards disabled children, 57.35 percent teachers have moderate attitude on Government role towards education of disabled children and 25.74 percent teachers have low attitude on Government role towards disabled children education. This indicates that majority of teachers do not have positive attitude on Government role towards disabled children education. They felt that Government should take more steps for development of disabled children education in the district.

**Table - 2**

Frequency and Percentage of Parents response on Government role towards Education of disabled children. (N=64)

Score Range	Frequency	%	Level of attitude
100-120	12	18.75	High
70-119	38	59.38	Moderate
40-69	14	21.87	Low

Table-2 shows that majority of parents (59.38%) have moderate attitude on Government role for development of disabilities children education, 18.75 percent parents have high attitude and 21.87 percent have low attitude on Government role towards disabilities children education. The result indicates that majority of parents are not fully satisfied with the role of Government on disabled children education.

**Table - 3**

Mean, Standard Deviation and t value of Teachers' and Parents' attitude on Government role towards education of disabled children.

	N	M	S.D.	t-value	Remarks
Teachers	136	86.43	8.15	5.35	Significant at 0.01 levels.
Parents	64	107.16	11.32		

Table-3 reveals that the Mean score of Teachers' and Parents' attitude towards education of disabled children on Government role is 86.43 with S.D. of 8.15. Again, the Mean value is 107.16 and S.D. value is 11.32 of Parents attitude. The t-value found 5.35 which is significant at .01 level. Thus it is revealed that there is significant difference in attitude of parents and teachers on Govt. roles towards education of disabled children.

**Objective 2:** To study teachers and parents attitude on role of NGO's towards education of disabled children.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference between teachers and parents attitude on NGO's role towards education of disabled children.

**Table - 4**

Frequency and Percentage of Teachers response on NGO's role towards education of disabled children (N=136)

Score Range	Frequency	%	Level of attitude
100-120	12	8.82	High
70-119	34	25	Moderate
40-69	90	66.18	Low

Table-4 shows that 8.82 percent teachers have high attitude, 25 percent teachers have moderate attitude and 66.18 percent teachers have low attitude on NGO's role towards education of disabled children in Morigaon district. This indicates that majority teachers are not showing good attitude on NGO's activity for development of education of disabled children.

**Table - 5**

Frequency and Percentage of Parents response on NGO's role towards education of disabled children (N=64)

Score Range	Frequency	%	Level of attitude
100-120	8	12.50	High
70-119	18	29.69	Moderate
40-69	37	57.81	Low

Table-5 shows that majority of parents (57.81%) have low attitude, 29.69 percent parents have moderate attitude and only 12.50 percent have high attitude on NGO's role towards education of disabled children. This indicates that parents of disabled children are also not satisfied on NGO's role towards education of disabled children in the Morigaon district.

**Table - 6**

Mean, Standard Deviation and t value of Teachers' and Parents' attitude on NGO's role towards education of disabled children.

	N	M	S.D.	t-value	Remarks
Teachers	136	94.22	8.15	1.34	Significant at 0.05 levels.
Parents	64	102.32	11.32		

Table-6 shows the Mean score of Teachers' and Parents' attitude on NGO's role towards education of disabled children is 94.22 and 102.32 with SD of 8.15 and 11.32 respectively. The t-value is found 5.35 which is significant at .05 level of significance.

#### Discussion and conclusion:

The present study found that various constitutional provisions, policies and agenda of the Government have paid attention towards education of disabled children in the state. Due to lack of proper monitoring of Government agencies such programmes have failed to work effectively.

Majority of the teachers and parents have opined that shortage of teachers, resources, teaching learning materials, lack of extra curriculum and school time table, disabled children have faced difficulties to fulfill their needs.

In this study, teachers and parents have low attitude on NGO's role towards education of disabled children. This indicates that for development of education of disabled children, the role of different NGO's are very significant.

Inclusive education is not an alternative of education but an inevitability of education process. The dream of providing basic education to all children is to ever become a reality when all the concerned professional, grassroot workers, teachers, Government, NGO's, community members should address the issues of education of children with special needs, especially in rural and remote areas.

The Government and NGO's policies should deal with fulfilling educational needs of disabled children. Additional training facilities and Government support for infrastructure development are required towards education of disabled children. To conclude, including children with disabilities is a challenging task reaching the wide spectrum of learning needs of every child under the inclusive umbrella.

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## **Inclusive Education for Differently Able Student with Special Reference to the Udalguri Education Block**

■ **Nilotpal Chakravarty**

### **ABSTRACT**

*UNESCO defines inclusive education as a process intended to respond to students' diversity by increasing their participation and reducing exclusion within and from education. It is related to the attendance, participation and achievement of all students, especially those who, due to different reasons, are excluded or at risk of being marginalized. Inclusive education is an approach in teaching where children both able and disabled are given knowledge in the same classroom.*

*The World Health Organization (WHO) defines disability as an umbrella term covering impairments, activity limitations and participatory restrictions. Here impairments refer to bodily impairments which prevent the person in performing an activity or in participating in any activity. According to 'The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995' disability means- blindness, low vision, leprosy-cured, hearing impairment, locomotor disability, mental retardation and mental illness.*

*Inclusive education helps children not only to learn together but also to live together. Inclusive education helps to stop discrimination as students study together. However, the success of*

*inclusive education depends mostly on the teacher individual approach and infrastructure of the classroom and school. This paper is an attempt to explain various aspects of inclusive education for differently abled student (disabled student) in Udalguri Educational Block such as their population, disability status, educational status, economic status and gender.*

**Key Words:** *Inclusive education, Differently abled, Marginalized etc*

#### **Introduction :**

Disabled children are one of the most marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society. Disability and exclusion go hand in hand. Disabled children face discrimination in the society. Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century people have negative attitudes towards disabled people. They are barred from enjoying their basic rights. India being the largest democracy in the world has a great responsibility to ensure the development of all, specially the disabled. 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's 200 million school-aged children (6-14 years), 20 million require special need based education. While the national average for gross enrolment in school is over 90 per cent, less than five per cent of children with disabilities are in school.

#### **The scenario of Assam as far as inclusive education for Children with Special Needs (CWSN) :**

The State has identified 103590 CWSN (including 7075 Learning Disability cases) in the age group of 6-14, out of a total child population of 57, 12,364 (6-14) which is 1.81% of the total child population in the State. The PAB approved an outlay of Rs. 1778.777 lakh under Inclusive Education for 96515 CWSN at a unit cost of Rs. 1843/- per child per annum covering the broad activities.

#### **Objectives of the paper :**

The present paper tries to focus on the following aspects regarding inclusive education in Udalguri education block of Assam.

1. To find out the total number of disabled children and their disability status in Udalguri education block.
2. To find out the economic status of the children with disabilities.
3. To analyze the status of present educational status of the disabled students in general and Assam in particular.

#### **Methodology:**

The present study is mainly based on secondary sources of data. The secondary sources of data are collected from books, journals, internet etc. The quantitative data used in the study is a survey record from the office of the Sarbashiksha Abhiyan and these data are analyzed by using the SPSS.

#### **History and status of inclusive education at the national level:**

During pre independence period, it was Gandhiji who tried to cater marginalized population because it focused on handicrafts, which favoured the lower castes and people with disabilities, many of whom were used to working with their hands and hadn't previously done much academic work. But mainstream education system during British rule was not favourable for the disabled as person with disability did not make out to go to school. Only Private schools opened their door for them. In this connection initiatives forwarded by the NGOs were taken for granted.

The first special school for people with disabilities in India was a school for the blind, which was opened in 1869 by Jane Leupot, with support of the Church Missionary Society. Fourteen years later, in 1883, a school for the deaf was opened in Bombay. 1887 marked the year Christian missionaries opened a school for the blind in Amritsar. During the 1800s, all of the special schools for people with disabilities



accommodated people with physical disabilities; it was not until 1918 that the first school for people with intellectual disabilities was established. All of these schools exemplify the type of special education services offered during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century specialized and segregated. By 1900, special schools were springing up throughout the country. Until the 1970s, these schools were the primary method of service delivery for children with disabilities. Most were for children who were blind or visually impaired, and the majority was funded by nongovernmental organizations or private funding agencies.

#### **Post-independence period:**

The post independence period started up quite smoothly and slowly for education for disabled. The 1960s marked an important change in the direction that how special education was organized and funded in India. The Ministry of Education was split, and a new branch called the Ministry of Social Welfare was created. The Ministry of Social Welfare was given the responsibility for the "weak and vulnerable" sections of society. They largely focused on rehabilitation, and not as much on education. Instead of supporting the current education system, the Ministry of Social Welfare began giving out grants to nonprofits that provided education for children with disabilities, inadvertently preventing inclusion of these children within the public or mainstream sector.

#### **Government policies and programmes towards inclusive education:**

India's scenario regarding inclusive education was changed when Kothari Commission recommended some of the new policies for education system in India. Unfortunately the recommendations by the Kothari Commission in 1964 never implemented. But in this report a clause for education for the disabled were clearly mentioned.

We now turn to the education of handicapped children. Their education has to be organized not merely on humanitarian grounds of utility. Proper education generally enables a handicapped child to

overcome largely his or her disability and make him into a useful citizen. Social justice also demands an overall view of the problem. However, we feel that experimentation with integrated programmes is urgently required and every attempt should be made to bring in as many children in integrated programs.

A drastic change was expected in the National Policy on Education in 1986 as far as inclusion of disabled students in the mainstream education was concerned. The NPE states that children with "mild" disabilities should be included in mainstream classrooms, whereas children with "moderate to severe" disabilities should be placed in segregated schools. But this clause including only those with "mild" disabilities had made controversies as many were upset that this policy contradicted Article 45 of the constitution, which lists equality in education as a fundamental right for all. Positive thing about this NPE was the provisions of compulsory special pre-service training for teachers in mainstream education.

Before the NPE 1986, a bold initiative was taken up by the Government under the Integrated Education of Disabled Children Scheme in the year 1974. The Ministry of Social welfare initiated this programme to provide children with disabilities "financial support for books, school uniforms, transportation, special equipment and aids," with the intention of using these aids to include children in mainstream classrooms.

The constitution of India has several provisions which provide 'Education for All'. Right to elementary education is a fundamental right under Article 21A of the Indian constitution. Article 21A declares that the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such a manner as the State may determine. This provision was added to the constitution of India by the 86<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002. However this provision of the Indian constitution has made only elementary education a fundamental right and not higher or professional education. Thus a child with disabilities is entitled to free and compulsory elementary education. Before the 86<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act, 2002 there was a provision

for free and compulsory education of children under Article 45 of the constitution. Article 45 states that- 'The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years'. Under Article 51A which provide the 'Fundamental Duties'- 'It shall be the duty of every citizen of India to provide opportunities for education to his child or ward between the age of six and fourteen years'. It means that it is the duty of parents to send their wards to school and provide opportunities for their education. The Government of India has passed the "Person with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation)" Act (PWD) in 1995. It is an important Act which deals with education of disabled people, their employment, prevention of disabilities, rehabilitation of person with disabilities etc. The PWD Act provides for the appointment of Chief Commissioner for persons with disabilities to look into their complaints and to hear their pleas. The Government of India (GOI) has started a programme for universal elementary education in the year 2000-2001 popularly known Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is an effort to universalize elementary education. SSA ensures that every child with special needs, irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided education in an appropriate environment. SSA adopts 'zero rejection' policy so that no child is left out of the education system. The Government of India has initiated several measures for disabled people such as job reservation, scholarships to pursue higher education, financial assistance to buy aids and appliances that promote rehabilitation by reducing effects of disabilities and enhancing their economic potentialities etc.

In Assam there are many institutions both in the public and private sector working for education of disabled children. In 1968, the State Government established the Govt. B.D.S Deaf and Dumb School at Kahilipara, Guwahati for the education of deaf and dumb children. The school has specially trained teacher to teach the students and also hostel facilities. Assam has two Govt. blind schools one at Jorhat with an intake capacity of 250 students established in 1974 and another one

at Basistha with an intake capacity of 100 students established in 1976. There is a Braille press established at Basistha that publish books for sightless students. A school for hearing impaired was established in 1996 at Jorhat with an intake capacity of 50 students. In 1985 the State Council of Education Research and Training (SCERT) was established in Assam to improve the quality of school education and teacher education. The SCERT has 11 Academic Departments and one of the departments is Department of Education for Special Focus Group, Children with Special Needs and ECCE etc. This department of SCERT focuses specially to the needs of the children with disabilities and their education. SCERT is working with Assam Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to implement programmes meant for educating the children with disabilities and also training teachers for inclusive education. It provides training regarding methodology to be adopted in inclusive education. There are number of Non Governmental Organizations in Assam working for rehabilitation and education of disabled children. For example, Shishu Sarothi, Assam Andha Shishu Vidyalaya, Bihpuria, Sreemanta Sankar Mission Blind School, Nagaon, Ghilamara Andha Vidyalaya, Lakhimpur, Janamangal Adarsha Andha Vidyalaya, Moranhat, Mental Welfare Society etc.

In spite of the various measures adopted by both the Central Government and State Government, a number of children with disabilities do not go to school. The schemes meant for disabled people are not implemented properly. Disabled children still remains as the vulnerable section both in India and particularly in Assam.

#### **Data Analysis :**

Udalguri is one of the tribal dominated areas in Assam. Before the signing of Bodo Accord, Udalguri was the sub-divisional headquarter of Darrang district. Later it became one of the four districts of Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD). The district is bounded by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh in the North, Sonitpur in the East, Darrang district in the South and Baska district in the West. The district of Udalguri lies between 26.46 degree and 26.77 degree

North latitude and 92.08 degree and 95.15 degree East longitude and at an altitude of about 345 above the mean sea level. Udalguri district has a total population of 832769 of which male population is 423617 and female population is 409152. The density of population is 497 per square kilometer. The sex ratio of the district is 966 female per 1000 male. The rural population of the district is 795191 and urban population is 37578. Literacy rate of the district is 66.60% of which male literacy rate is 73.79% and female literacy rate is 59.17%. The child population i.e. 0 to 6 years of age is 109263. (Source: Statistical Hand Book Assam, 2012, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Assam) For the present study, data used are collected from survey records of Children With Special Needs (CWSN) under Sarbashiksha Abhiyan.

As far as the educational block of Udalguri is concerned, it has two sub divisions viz. Bhergaon and Udalgui Sadar and three Legislative Assembly Constituencies (LAC) viz. Paneri, Udalguri and Majbat. As per the objectives of the research, the first objective is to find out the total number of disabled students within the Udalguri Educational Block. According to the survey conducted the following tables help us to understand the sub-division wise and LAC wise distribution of disabled students respectively.

Table - 1

LAC wise number of disabled students:

Name of the LAC	Frequency	Percent
64 Paneri	343	21.0
69 Udalguri	1135	69.6
70 Majbat	152	9.3
Total	1630	100.0

Source: prepared by the author from the data collected from field work

The total number of disabled students found in the Survey record is 1630 whereas within the 64 Paneri LAC, there are 343 disabled students. 69 Udalguri LAC recorded highest number (1135) of disabled students whereas 70 Majbat LAC recorded 152.

Table - 2

Sub division wise number of disabled students

Sub division	Frequency	Percent
Bhergaon	466	28.6
Udalgui Sadar	1164	71.4
Total	1630	100.0

Source: prepared by the author from the data collected from field work

The above table shows that within the Bhergaon sub division, there are total 466 numbers of disabled students and within the Udalgui Sadar there are total 1164 disabled students. According to the Survey record, 917 males and 713 females children were found.

While analyzing the survey record, it was found that among the total disabled children only 25 students are not getting any kind of education and 260 are having home based education. Out of 1630 disabled students, 1345 (82.5%) are pursuing school based education.

Table - 3

Educational status of the disabled children

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	1345	82.5
No	25	1.5
Home base education	260	16.0
Total	1630	100.0

Source : prepared by the author from the data collected from field work.

The economic condition of the family is the most affecting factor to the education of the disabled students. Due to poverty, children remain malnourished and it may lead to disability and malnourished mother may give birth to disabled child. Moreover, the Below Poverty Line (BPL) family may unable to provide education to their disabled children. Connecting these prospects, the study tried to find out the poverty status of the disabled children. The following table can show the poverty status of them.

**Table - 4**  
Poverty status of the disabled children.

BPL	Frequency	Percent
Yes	1314	80.6
No	316	19.4
Total	1630	100.0

Source : prepared by the author from the data collected from field work.

The above table clearly shows that 1314 number of disabled children belong to the BPL families and only 19.4% i.e. 316 are not from BPL background.

**Conclusion :**

Some important findings emerged from the analysis. Udalguri educational block has an ample number of children with disabilities and males are more than females. Parents and teachers attitude and beliefs about inclusive education were somehow positive, and they take the initiative to practice inclusive education in their classroom. Teachers realised that inclusion could increase acceptance of students with disabilities both in the classroom and society. As most of the disabled children attending schools which clearly indicates that inclusive education is being practised in the schools of Udalguri Educational Block. Another important finding of the study is that the disabled children mainly belong to the BPL category.

A range of barriers within education policies, systems and services limit disabled children's mainstream educational opportunities such as legislation, policy, targets, plans, inadequate resources, inadequate training and support for teachers, inadequate curriculum and pedagogy, physical barriers and attitudinal barriers etc. Therefore a strong support system with right action plan is dire necessity from parents, teachers, government and the society.

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## About the Book

This book is an attempt to analyse the inclusive education system in India in general and North east India in particular. It throws light on different issues of inclusive education with particular reference to North Eastern region. The issues, implementation status, challenges and prospects related to the field of inclusive education have been highlighted citing some case studies of the area.



## About the Editor

Dr. Manuj Kumar Chutia, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Nowgong Girls' College, Nagaon completed his post graduation and Ph.D. in Education from Gauhati University. He has contributed many research papers to number of reputed books and journals and authored three books in education i.e. '*Shaishik aru Monobaigyanik Parimapon*', '*Shiksha Parishankhya Bigyan*' and '*Bisesh Shiksha*'. His areas of interest are Measurement and evaluation in Education, Educational Management, Statistics in Education and Gender issues.



ISBN 978-93-85310-42-3



9 789385 310423

Printed at  
Gigabytes Press & Publication,  
Milanpur, Nagaon (Assam)

₹400/-