Chapter – II

Concepts and Developments in Inclusive Education

This chapter is an attempt to understand the concepts of disability, disability education, disability policies and disability educational policies and their implementation at the national level. As a part of it, considerable literature from both national and international arena touching upon the literature of academics, activism, internet and government sources have been reviewed for better understanding of the proposed research.

Understanding Inclusion

The term ‘inclusion’ has deeper connotation and does not refer only to children with disabilities, but also includes all children who face some kind of barrier in learning. Children with disabilities are still enshrined in the ideologies of segregation; labelling and categorised environments in the light of medical definition of disability while the society is moving towards rights-based approach. The need of the hour is ‘Accepting the diversity’. It is a larger philosophy to deal with the children with different needs in the regular school system and teaching all children to understand and accept the differences. The debate over segregation and inclusion in ordinary schools widened other ideologies towards equal opportunities. Fundamental questions like gender issues, disability and poverty will confront us when prioritising services but disability is a part of everything. The whole understanding of inclusive education in terms of special needs refers that the attitude of teachers, peer group and parents is a major barriers for integration [Hegarty & Alur: 2005].

Madan Mohan Jha in ‘Inclusive Education and the Common Schools in India’ said that the history of education of persons with disabilities is a progression from segregation to integration, and now to inclusion. The question for the children with disability in inclusive settings is largely related to the right to equality, protection of life and personal liberty enshrined in the Indian Constitution (Article14, 21) with Directive Principles under the Article 38.
(social order with justice and elimination of inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities), Article 39 (tender age children not be abused) and Article 46 (promotion of educational interests of the weaker section) [Mohapatra: 2004] shows the constitutional validity of Inclusive Education as a part of Indian Constitution and policy making.

The thrust for promoting inclusive education is because of its effective results in regular schools with inclusive orientation to combat the discriminatory attitudes built around disability. It is also believed that inclusive education could create ‘welcoming communities’ based on inclusive society which in turn would help to achieve education for all. The idea of inclusive education is a big landmark in the creation of inclusive society and on inclusive family. The concept of inclusion would only be cost effective but it would tackle the discriminatory attitudes towards disability that children grow with and carry with them into their adulthood. While the segregation teaches children to be fearful, ignorant and breeds prejudice but inclusion has the potential to reduce fear, build friendship, respect and understanding. Inclusive Education results are intangible. The dreams of parents of children with special needs would come true in terms of social life; the children would develop a positive understanding of themselves and others; the children would develop friendships in a natural manner and all children would be together. To simplify, Inclusive Education develops a sense of belongingness between children with special needs and children without special needs. In a true sense, Inclusive Education is nothing but children with special needs participating in their everyday activities irrespective of their mild / severe /hidden disabilities. It is about building friendships, membership and having opportunities equal to everyone.

The objective of inclusive education is not only to serve the purpose of education but also concerns of social and moral education. The education, social and moral, reduces isolation and prejudices, enhances understanding,
accepts the deviations from socio-cultural view point, and increases the contribution of children with special needs to the society. The basic idea of Inclusive Education is to value every child and family equally and creating the same opportunities and experiences. Considering the wide benefits of Inclusive Education, we need to devise ways to shift to inclusive education from special education. The government intervention through Inclusive Education Policy [IEP] shows that it has moulded the movement of inclusion at other levels like family and community, because the family has the potential of turning a child into happy child or unhappy child [Sethi: 2005].

Inclusion could be understood in three broad perspectives: human rights, good education and good social sense. As a part of human rights, every child has the right to be together while learning. They should not be devalued or discriminated by excluding or sending away because their disability or learning difficulty has no legitimate reasons to suggest separate education. Staying together only would be an advantage and benefit to every child and they do not need any protection from each other. The research on Children with Special Needs [CWSN] showed that they can perform better in academics as well as in social integrated settings if they are provided with good education. All children need good education that can develop relationships and prepare them for mainstream life. Hence, Inclusive Education is a more efficient use of educational resource if commitment and support are added in implementation [Raman: 2004].

In the historical perspectives of necessity of inclusion, special and inclusive educational services in India, innovations in implementation regarding different impairments suggested way forward through amendments in law and policy. One such measure is inclusion through community development, which is, to make the adults and children with disabilities as a part of the society. It is to raise equal value and promote opportunities for all children. Education, to this context, should develop both the social and personal aspects of an individual.
But, the right to education can be realised only when schools begin to consider the different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds of those children and their broader range of learning styles, behaviours, capabilities, and potentials in all sensory domains. It would not be an easy task to have sudden impact on established settings. Hence, inclusive education is sometimes should be seen as a political strategy based on human rights and democratic principles that confront all forms of discrimination to develop an inclusive society as an alternative to ignored or neglected society. To simplify, Inclusive Education is an attitude—a value and belief system but not a set of actions. A school with this attitude could only create an inclusive education.

Principles of inclusion show that the system accepts and promotes the fact that the requirements of majority of children with special educational needs could be accommodated within regular school system. There would be explicit recognition if the education of all children with special needs is a responsibility of the national school system. The leadership and resources should be provided to make flexible primary teaching and curricula in order to allow common experiences and specialised goals according to the variety of individual needs and environmental circumstances. The best results in inclusive education are possible with the close links between regular and special education, formal and non-formal systems, and school and community sectors. Finally, encouragement to community and parental involvement, including distribution of control responsibility will give best results in this field.

The Inclusive Education will have a great significance because a child with disability is generally greeted with disappointment, frustration and anger in the society. The initial years of their life would have been spent either in medical shopping or neglected or in over protection. This extreme situation might have excluded the child from opportunity of love, nurture and of simply being child. The child would have been provided but would not have been encouraged to grow by doing even the easier things. In such circumstances, it would be unfair to expect the person with disability to find a firm footing suddenly in the
normal world, after a long exclusion from mainstream opportunities of normal schooling, and other growth opportunities [Puri, Abraham & George: 2004].

To understand inclusive classroom, we need to understand the principles behind educational diversity and inclusive policies, and also discuss the range of teachers in an inclusive classroom. The focus on implementing inclusive curriculum, strategies for managing a classroom and promoting positive social relationships would be the thought alternative to the cause. The ongoing, systematic segregation of students’ by ability, race and class sends a powerful and well-learned message that one needs to revise. The clear-excellence can exist only with equity. The term Inclusive Education is important because it adds a clear voice that helps teachers, administrators and parents to visualise in concrete form of ‘truly inclusive instruction’. Till recent times the term ‘children with diverse educational needs’ is in practice. It recognises the necessity to create an effective inclusive classroom, which requires the range of intellectual and behavioural functioning. It could be better to (1) educate children in part-time special schools and part-time regular schools, (2) educating children in special or mostly segregated environments in regular schools, (3) educating children in regular classes but requiring them to follow substantially different courses of study in terms of content and learning environment to their peers. Inclusion means full inclusion of children with diverse abilities in all aspects of schooling that other children are able to access and enjoy. It implies regular schools and classrooms genuinely adapting and changing to meet the needs of all children, as well as celebrating and valuing differences. The process would be successful only when a teacher is highly skilled and motivated to the cause. There are sufficient research evidences to suggest that inclusion of even children with the most severe disabilities can work if schools have a culture of shared values and are genuinely committed to improving their practice. Inclusion is not a success, because it has not been communicated to those who are involved in the process.
The degree of success of inclusion can be related to several factors, perhaps the most important being teachers’ preparation, attitudes, and opportunity for collaboration. Issues surrounding curriculum provision to children with diverse abilities and their peers in inclusive setting are central to successful inclusion. These are not only strategies to inclusion but also matters for implementation. Unless we teach our children to live and work together in valuing differences in culture, ethnicity, language, background and even dramatically different cognitive, social-emotional, and sensory-physical abilities, inclusion cannot be achieved. In fact, we almost always teach the opposite-systematic forms of segregation, oppression, intolerance and elitism. The benefits of inclusion are high levels of interaction, social competence and communication skills, skill acquisition, social acceptance and friendships. As a whole, Inclusive Education conveys that the students with disabilities are also entitled to get equal education opportunities along with other (non-disabled) students [Loreman, Deppeler & Harvey: 2006].

Segregation of the children with special needs leaves us unaware of the realities of disabilities and the possibilities. If non disabled children become aware about disabilities, there would be greater chance to grow into sensitive adults, regardless of whether their own families had special children. They are also likely to contribute towards providing facilities for the disabled because they knew someone in their school. Hence, the focus should be on child-centred Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for integrating these children into regular classrooms. A special Educator has to be specially deputed for monitoring special children who are placed in regular classrooms. Therapeutics like physiotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, pre-vocational activities etc. should also be included in the IEPs [Lakshmi: 2003].

Inclusion may be the key word in India’s current education policy, but there is a world of difference between legislation and its implementation. Legislation is in favour of inclusion and various state and central boards, like Central Board
of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Indian Certificate for School Education (ICSE) have issued different circulars. In a circular issued in May 2005, the CBSE states that children with disabilities should have barrier-free access to all educational facilities, and that dyslexic students can study one language instead of two and any four of the subjects such as mathematics, science, social science, music and painting, among others. ICSE provides extra time to students with disabilities to complete exams, as well as writers, if required. The children can also choose from a number of subjects such as yoga and physical training [Deepa: 2006].

**Inclusion and Schools**

As discussed above, the school need to respond in terms of access, social domination and discrimination to have an inclusive set up. Access in the schools need to be given first importance in the process for Inclusive Education. The use of the word “access” reflects how a school is conceived of. The dominant understanding of the school has strong physical connotations. A school is perceived primarily as a physical entity. The school is a sum of teachers and some materials. This physical understanding of a school has a number of implications. Top of them are (1) specialisation of identity; (2) temporal sequentialisation in thinking, (3) metonymic signification and (4) exclusion. The identity of the school gets created by the kind of physical space it occupies and its’ aggregate of physical attributes. The whole thinking on education, at its foundational level, has been sequentialised into access, retention and achievement, as if these are three chronologically progressive stages of history. The physical understanding of school is reflected in this spacing between access and retention and achievement. The spatial identity of the school dominates the understanding of education. This is what marks the school as site of exclusion. This exclusion is social, cultural and epistemological. The school borrows its cultural paradigms from the socially dominant groups, either rejecting or seeking to modify on its own terms, all other forms of cultural expressions. The school is allowed to exist as a physical
construct but the school and education get distanced in time [Sharma: 2003]. As a physical site, the school invariably gets mapped on an axis of social domination, because the socially privileged have visibility and determine the material contours of social identity and public action. The physical grid that delineates ‘access’ comes to express the way power is understood and exercised in a society. The children move up if they are good in all subjects or are held back for not being even in one i.e. their movement is always vertical or they are static. School is naturally designed to encourage a dropout, if not physically, definitely intellectually and emotionally of children unable to cope with a system whose pressures are created by arbitrary and rigid divisions of time and space as categories for organising academic processes. Some forms of manifestation are persistent in low performance, inhibition, fear, reluctance to go to school but only some of these forms get acknowledged and that too, not as schooling problems but as social or individual problems [Sharma: 2003].

The cultural ethos of the school also has a major effect on determining the understanding of the joys of learning. The school modelled on hierarchy and impersonal authority constructs the child as a passive subject. The joy of learning can emerge only if freedom is an essential mode of learning and in a discussion on education both these aspects are significant because education addresses the mind, the self and the world. It necessarily tends towards pluralism, seeking to formulate a shared ground between the subjective and the objective. The school becomes a medium for education if it can make the child conscious of this situation, a situation he/she already is in, and develop skills to enable him/her to deal with it, i.e., the capacity to interpret, choose and understand the nature of freedom. The joy of learning lies in education that emerges from this belief and uses the text as an opportunity for critical questioning. If education is perceived as developing a critical consciousness of life then the methods of interaction at the basic schooling levels have to transform from their current colonial-positivistic character to what has been described here as rationalist-liberal character [Sharma: 2003].
Special Education
Special education field is still in its infancy as far as mainstreaming and integrated education is concerned. Children with special needs often receive services in a segregated or a special school. Though segregated schools work to help these children and provide specialised services, the entire possibility of mainstreaming these children is lost. Children with special needs often have to commute long distances to reach their schools as there are only few centres in any city which offer specialised services. A serious social problem faced by these children as they grow is that they have to explain to their peer group why they go to a special school and not to a regular school. The alternative mechanism is to learn ‘adaptive behaviour’ to cope with his /her individual condition but also the harsh reality of society's attitude towards him /her. As a human being, it is but natural to yearn for acceptance and recognition. After that, all the extra-curricular activities like physical training, games, drawing /painting, socially useful and productive activities, cultural activities like music, dance, annual day, sports day and all the other festivals conducted in a school should have full participation by special children along with their normal peers [Lakshmi: 2003].

Understanding Exclusion
Social Exclusion, in European context, has been defined in relation to social rights of citizens to retain basic standards of living and participation in the major social and occupational opportunities of the society [Singh, RR:. . .]. Therefore, to include the children with disabilities, it is required to understand, educate and provide proper facilities to students with disability [Bradley: 1994]. The social attitude towards children with disabilities oscillated from ignorance to awareness. But it is true that they were treated differently i.e., either respectfully or cruelly, depending upon the belief systems prevailing at a specific time. The children were always singled out because of their families’ constant stress of looking after the child with a feeling of shame. So the necessity of education and training were never thought into action. Recognising
the necessity, professionals, NGOs, and social activists took active interest in
the education and training of CWSN so as to help the family and to realise the
individual abilities of these children. As a consequence, changes were seen at
the family level but the acceptance by the society remained a major task [Sethi:
2005].

Being the largest minority group in the world, the persons with disabilities are
starved of services and facilities available to the non-disabled and, consequently, they are the least nourished, the least healthy, the least educated,
and the least employed. They have faced a long history of neglect, isolation,
segregation, poverty, deprivation, charity and even pity [Mishra & Gupta:
2006].

To persuade parents of ‘normal’ children to accept ‘children with disability’ as
classmates is certainly not a cakewalk, given the deeply entrenched social
prejudices. It is a positive change that the enlightened management of some
mainstream schools, across the country, are waking up to the need and
advantages of inclusive education. Besides, social and parental attitudes, there
is a lack of disability-friendly transport services, buildings and sensitive
teachers who can handle the learning needs of special children. The studies
reveal that most of the public buildings in India are neither friendly nor
accessible to people with disabilities. As a result, they are excluded from
participating in public discourses [Chatterjee: 2003].

The cultural underpinnings and value system are still dominating the society.
Because of such notions, disability is still considered a taboo or stigma. As a
corollary, they have been socially excluded and put into constricted
pathological boundaries. Aforementioned social exclusion excluded children
with special needs from policies and led to marginalisation and oppression
from the mandate of education. The awful perspective of the society operated
in India is responsible for not achieving Universalization of Elementary Education [Hegarty & Alur: 2005].

There are five main mechanisms of exclusion in increasing severity: geography, entry barriers, corruption and physical violence. Disability, as social concept, is affected by all the five mechanisms. Disability restricts people from moving in all geographical locations. The structural barriers have always limited entry to different areas. Emotional violence is always created on physical basis. As a result of exclusion, the children with disabilities are becoming objects of humiliation, derision and contempt [Singh, R.R, ...]. The current market also plays a crucial role in excluding the children with disability. The present phase of globalisation is not only integrating consumer markets but it is also creating new inequalities, unbalanced information flows and challenges to the protection of human rights. The emergence of new human poverty, according to the HRD report, calls for pro-poor and pro-environment growth and strong civil society alliance (HRD: 1998) [Singh, R.R, ...]. As the market requires people working for more hours and speedy accessibility, many students with disability are out of the jobs. Their basic problem is inaccessibility. The system is ready to exclude them rather than include them into proper accessible environments [Bradley: 1994].

In the process from exclusion to inclusion, society needs to take the responsibility of people with disabilities [PWD] because their non-participation in community life results in loss of productivity and human potential. To fight for the right to inclusion, PWD need to live in an environment in which they are empowered. In addition to it, Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) is an approach which has grown out of the debate between the so-called medical and social models of disability. Its supporters believe that it can meet the basic rehabilitation needs of four out of five people with disability. CBR attempts to combine physical rehabilitation through medical care and to empower the PWD with employment and social inclusion through participation of the individual
with a disability as well as the community in the process of rehabilitation [DFID: 2000].

According to the United Nations, one person in every twenty has some type of disability. More than three out of four of these live in a developing country. The report also states that ‘disability’ limits access to education and employment, and leads to economic and social exclusion. But, in reality, a large proportion of disability is preventable. The report believes that achieving the international development targets for economic, social and human development will undoubtedly reduce the levels of disability in many poor countries [DFID: 2000].

**Learning Disabilities**

Difficulties in learning are a common phase in every child’s life. The difficulty faced while learning education are called as Learning Disabilities. Hence, Learning Disabilities are considered as a part of special needs education. According to Chadda (2000), Learning Disabilities [LD] may have a variety of meanings and labels depending on the experience, perspective, and information about the child in question, family background and socio-economic status. This enigma remains as children exhibiting learning disabilities may manifest a wide variety of social and educational problems. The learning disabilities are academic learning difficulty, language disorders, delayed spoken language development, perceptual disorder and other similar characteristics of CWSN. Among them, Dyslexia (problems in reading), Dysgraphia (problems in writing), Discalculia (problem in maths) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (problem in paying attention) can be easily identified. The remedy to such problems can be teaching with joyful activities to make learning more interesting for the children. Along with that, psycho-social supports to children with learning disabilities, from parents, teacher and peers would give better results. To elaborate, raising a child with learning disabilities requires
dedicated parents, caring teacher, knowledgeable psychologists and committed researchers [Chadda: 2001].

According to Machado, there is little awareness among teachers on learning disabilities and schools hardly have facilities for holding remedial classes for those with learning disabilities. Though Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992, says that children with disabilities have the right to be taught by a qualified teacher, a majority of the schools don’t have special educators or counsellors, even if they have students with disabilities [Deepa: 2006].

Disability and Poverty
Defining disability is complex and controversial. A full understanding of disability recognises a powerful human rights dimension often associated with social exclusion, and increased exposure and vulnerability to poverty. While examining the cause and consequences of disability, poverty stands on both sides. Almost 50 percent of disabilities are preventable and directly linked to poverty. It is estimated that only 2 percent people with disabilities in developing countries have access to rehabilitation and appropriate basic services. The UNESCO studies have suggested that only 1-2 percent of children with disabilities in developing countries receive education. Boys with disabilities attend schools more frequently than girls with disabilities. Studies show that women with disabilities are two to three times more likely to be victims of physical and sexual abuse than women with no disabilities [DFID: 2000].

“Disability is both a cause and consequence of poverty. Eliminating world poverty is unlikely to be achieved unless the rights and needs of people with disabilities are taken into account. This report assesses the significance of disability as a key development issue, and its importance in relation to poverty, human rights, and the achievement of internationally agreed development targets [DFID: 2000].
The close relationship between poverty alleviation and rehabilitating persons with disabilities is “the most crucial factor that has an impact on “development in all positive quarters” of persons with intellectual disabilities is “Poverty”.

One major idea to handle such situation is taking help from Self Help Groups [SHG]. Because, persons living close by will join together as a group with a positive intention of helping each other and collectively acting towards economic upliftment and for the development of the village /society they belong [Raman: 2004]. National Institute for Mental Health [NIMH] runs such groups and has seen improvement in mentally retarded children in Hyderabad and Secunderabad.

Disability and Census

Social justice and equity that are the dominant sentiments of the Constitution of India demand that India’s 35 million physically disabled, if not the 5 million mentally challenged, children should be given preferential access into primary and secondary schools. The fact, however, is that over 90 million physically challenged children worldwide, of who 36 million are in India, are being systemically excluded from mainstream education [Chatterjee: 2003]. Disability index of education, skill development and employment, based on National Sample Survey and Census 2001, presents a gloomy picture of the life of the people with disabilities in India. It shows the limitations in various rehabilitation measures adopted by the government and non-governmental organisations. According to the survey 1.8 per cent of the total population of the country, i.e. 18.49 million people have various types of disabilities which include visual, speech, hearing, mental and locomotor disabilities. But the educational, social, health, transport and residential arrangements made by local, state, central governments or voluntary organisations often fall short of the requirement. This index has been computed for seven disability types for 16 major states. The data on employment of people with disabilities has been taken from Census 2001, while data on educational and skill development
(vocational education) opportunities has been taken from the NSS 58th round. The disability index for each disability type uses the data and categorisation of disability of NSS 58th round.

The disability index of a particular state shows the level of deprivation suffered by the disabled people in the state, the maximum deprivation level being 100. It is seen that the disability index of Orissa is at the maximum (80.39) and the disability index for Himachal Pradesh is the lowest (73.92). The fact that the minimum value of the disability index is 73.92 suggests that deprivation of basic growth facilities is at a very high level even where deprivation is low. This further explains that disabled are being bypassed in the process of economic development [Mishra & Gupta: 2006].

According to disability estimation in 58th round of NSS (2002) and Census 2001, there were 18.5 million persons with disabilities in 2002 compared with 21.9 million reported by the Census of 2001. This translates to a 20 percent of difference in the prevalence estimates, which can be considered as significant. The censuses of India and the NSS have different sampling designs. As said mentioned earlier, the census is an enumeration of the entire population of India while the NSS uses a nationally representative stratified sample. The census 2001 does not have a general definition of disability. Instead, a question on disability type was included in the population enumeration section (question 15) as follows: “If the person is physically/ mentally disabled, give appropriate code number for list below: in seeing, in speech, in hearing, in movement, mental”. The general definition of disability is thus defined overall as an activity limitation in the NSS. Substantial differences are observed in both the estimates. The largest difference in prevalence estimates between the two sources is for visual disability. Visual disability prevalence is estimated at 10.6 million in the census (48.6%) and rates were higher than the census rates are locomotor disability by about 30 percent. For speech and hearing, the rates were 11.7 per cent versus 7.5 per cent and 16.6 per cent versus 5.8 per cent.
respectively. The census and the NSS are two essential data sources that may be used in India to understand the frequency of persons with disabilities. It appears that the overall disability prevalence estimates in the census and the NSS are clearly not comparable. There are difficulties in comparing the estimates because the census does not have an overall definition of disability while the NSS does. Overall disability prevalence according to the census is the sum of prevalence estimates for the five disability types [Mitra & Moorthi: 2006].

**Literacy**

Literacy has much more meaning for a person with disability as it can, to a great extent, minimise the impact of disability on his/her livelihood. The People with Disability Act, 1995, stipulate that the government and appropriate local authorities shall “ensure that every child with a disability has access to free education in an appropriate environment till he/she attains age of 18”. Literacy has much more meaning to a person with disability as it lessens his/her plight and opens up opportunities for development. Indian literacy rate have shown a remarkable improvement in the last decade in the rural and urban areas. As per the 2001 Census the literacy rate in rural and urban India is 49 per cent and 70 per cent respectively. But, in the case of people with disabilities, the percentage is quite depressing at only 41 percent and 60 per cent respectively [Mishra & Gupta: 2006].

India constitutes around 55 percent of illiterates with disability. It is seen that current enrolment ratio per 100 disabled children in the ordinary schools is higher in rural areas than in the urban areas i.e. 475 and 444 respectively. Considering all the categories of disabilities, enrolment of locomotor impairment has the highest rate and mentally retarded has the lowest rate of literacy. The number of boy students, who enrol is higher compared to the girl students. In the case of enrolment in special schools, it was extremely urban-biased, that is, about 11 percent were enrolled in the special schools in the
urban areas as compared to the less than 1 percent in the rural areas [Mohapatra: 2004]. The above studies have necessitated the need for reducing the gaps in gender and rural and urban areas.

**Medical responsibility**

All medical training programs must have component of disability orientation, introducing genetic counselling units at all hospitals, in-service training to update knowledge, starting more number of PHCs, starting inclusion at Anganwadi level, formation of SHGS, parent/sibling training, community participation, youth involvement, architecture barriers, awareness at school and college level, and orientation to youth and administration [Sethi: 2005]. Few studies say that India inherited “a top heavy-bottom weak, elitist unproductive and irrelevant educational system from the British”. A big breach between policy stated and policy enacted in India is an open secret [Hegarty & Alur: 2005].

**Purpose of Education**

The focal point of the study is education. Educational systems explicitly or implicitly reflect a philosophical vision [Sharma: 2003]. The importance is given to education because of its direct impact on people. The process of education is to facilitate the continuous development and expression of the creativity. The success of education is the extent to which it enables human beings to discover their full potential and evolve a relationship with the world, based on critical inquiry and empathy [Sharma: 2002]. According to Amartya Sen, Jean Dreze and several others, lack of education is seen as the manifestation of our inadequacy, not as its cause. They have stressed that access to opportunity of education signifies true democracy. For them if India is claiming to be a democracy, it needs to create systemic conditions that will support such an equality of access [Madan: 2004].
Many developing countries, including India, have abolished official fees in primary education in an attempt to attain universal primary education. The 86th amendment to the Indian Constitution made free and compulsory education a fundamental right for all children in the age group 6-14 years. The purpose of the 86th amendment to the constitution of India is to make elementary education a fundamental right and statutorily enforceable.

Later in 2009, The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, was enacted on 26th August, 2009. According to it, the government is responsible for providing free elementary education to every child of the age of six to fourteen years; ensure compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by every child of the age of six to fourteen years; ensure availability of a neighbourhood school as specified in section 6; ensure that the child belonging to weaker section and the child belonging to disadvantaged group are discriminated against and prevented from pursuing and completing elementary education on any grounds; provide infrastructure including school building, teaching staff and learning equipment; provide special training facility; ensure and monitor admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by every child; ensure good quality elementary education conforming to the standards and norms; ensure timely prescribing of curriculum and courses of study for elementary education; and provide training facility for teachers. But this has came to existence after the present field research is completed (RTE Act 2010).

After controlling the opportunity cost of going to school (as proxied by the ratio of children’s wages to adult’s wages), it is found that the direct costs of education adversely affect the probability of children going to school, more so for children from poorer households. The performance showed by girls is relatively more likely to be affected by the direct costs of schooling than boys. Making primary education completely and free will not increase the attendance rates to 100 per cent. The state have to incur an additional minimum
expenditure of over Rs.2,900/- crore every year to defray the basic or incompressible cost of attending school [Chandrasekhar & Mukhopadhyay: 2006]. The journey of free and compulsory education in India can be considered as second freedom struggle, since ‘education’ is an important ‘freedom’ as authorised by Amartya Sen. The purpose of the 86th amendment to the constitution of India is to make elementary education a fundamental right and statutorily enforceable. The state governments may also enact their own legislation to achieve this purpose [Tilak: 2004].

School education should inculcate a quest for truth, a logical bent of mind and the faculty of scientific reasoning. It must foster a secular and democratic approach to life and to society, enabling the student to rise above communal, linguistic and other parochial prejudices. It must develop social awareness, a sense of obligation to society, a sense of dignity of labour, and strength of character to fight against exploitation and injustice [Rajesh: 2002]. Among the three factors involved in production—land, labour and capital—it is particularly the quality of labour that determines the competitiveness of a country. Therefore, without surprise there is a strong correlation between endowment of skilled labour and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per worker across countries. Higher education enhances a country’s capacity for participation in an increasingly knowledge-based world economy and has the potential to enhance economic growth and reduce poverty [Agarwal: 2006].

Understanding Teaching

The nature of teaching-learning process derives from the theory of meaning held. In a positivistic system, the teaching-learning process is based on the idea that meanings are objectively given and are universally accessible. Most of the teachers faithfully take the class through joyful singing and dancing but are not very convinced about them because they do not know why they are doing it. Most teachers having perfunctorily performed these will get back to the serious business of teaching. The alternative theory of meaning believes that ‘meaning’
is always constructed and ‘creativity’ is the condition of knowing. So communication is a creative transaction. Meaning is created not by a simple transfer but by participation in a process constituted by plural subjectivities responding to each other and to an established common referent world. The negotiation of meaning is then essentially a creative act, a continuous interplay of interpretations. Hence, teaching is a creative action and it is highly needed in the Inclusive Education process. Another important task of teacher is evaluation. Evaluation is not about failing and passing. It is inherent in the process of teaching-learning. The inhering of evaluation in a teaching-learning process is most often understood to mean physical integration of testing methods in the teaching system. Though this is referred to as ‘integration’, it really remains, both by its concept and function, external: information unit plus test. Evaluation as a conscious methodology can be effective only if it seeks to understand how to create this space, how to make it clearer, larger, richer for the teacher and the learner. The negotiation of meaning is then essentially a creative act—a continuous interplay of interpretations. The school becomes a medium for education if it can make the child conscious of this situation, a situation he/she already is in, and develop skills to enable her/him to deal with it, i.e., the capacity to interpret, chose and understand the nature of freedom [Sharma: 2003].

While, studying the teaching objective of the students with disability, learning them through the play, measuring the progress of the child, assessing the teacher and different types teaching methods to the mentally disabled students, teaching should serve three objectives such as (1) what is ought to be achieved by teaching (2) designing particular teaching and (3) it should allow the teacher to know the effectiveness of teaching. In simple words, the teaching objective refers to what should be the successful outcome of teaching activity. It is also important to assess the teacher because every teacher though takes pride in the achievement, however, refuses to accept responsibility for the child’s failure to learn. Typically, the child’s disability is blamed. In fact, there are no defined
rules to teach a child with special needs. Therefore we have to work on the basis of assumptions. Learning through play occupies an important role because undernourished children play very little, cold, bodily discomfort or extreme frustration will reduce the incidence of play. A child with disability has less opportunity to watch parents and others at work than a normal child. So, it is important to provide these opportunities for them. Play is the safety valve. A child, playing on their own cannot fail because he makes his own rules to fit his capacities, and may be constantly changing the rules of the game [Misra: 2002].

“A Survey of the Impact of an NGO Project to introduce an Accelerated Reading Technique in Schools in Maharashtra”, demonstrated that if children are taught properly, their academic abilities can improve substantially. Intervention was found to be more beneficial at the lower level rather than higher levels of primary education. The survey did not detect any gender bias in the process of learning. One of the distressing paradoxes of the Indian education system has been that while the government supported elitist centres (like the IITs and IIMs) of education that were able to reach international academics standards, the lower rungs of education like primary education has been grossly neglected. Reasons like lack of political will and apathy towards universal primary education that are found to be hindrances for the progress of primary education, has been studied and documented by many scholars [Sathe: 2005].

**Understanding Policy**

Education becomes state packaged welfare mechanism, rather than an opportunity for the community to learn. The school in a sovereign world, perpetuating a colonial culture, becomes a site for status-quoism and the child a stereotype. Such a construct of community makes the educational system worry about involving the community and contextualising curriculum and interventions for equity. Alarmed at the drop-out problem, additional structures
are created outside the school structure to mop-up the dropouts. Either they fail since they model themselves on the very school structure, which created the problem, or if they succeed they do not know how to relate to the mainstream school system. The apparent equal graded segments conceal the most unequal learning’s and continue to aggravate these inequalities, since there is no relief from the regimentation of the structure. This de-centring of the child is the real dropping, rather pushing, out of the child even if he /she is physically present in the school [Sharma: 2003].

Children with disabilities are not covered by existing legislation on learning disabilities nor are they appropriately served in regular or special schools or through alternative forms of education [Chadda: 2001]. Inclusive Education for the children with disabilities could be successful if it includes Braille teaching, special schools, Integrated Education, Vocationalisation and Scholarships according to the need and necessity. Providing Vocational Training Centres, Special Employment Exchanges, Voluntary Organisations, Scheme of National Awards, and Reservation under Rural Development programs for persons with disabilities would also be of great support. There is a serious need for community-based rehabilitation. Apart from inclusive education and disability, there is a need for legislative support to rehabilitate through co-ordination and advise the bodies of the government. It stresses on protection of rights, access to physical environment and social security provisions and rehabilitative services. The role of media could also be significant in forming strategies to create awareness, public education and information. Role of Voluntary Organisations also have been playing a crucial role in creating awareness and providing public information. The range of NGOs is different according to its nature, size of the voluntary sector, international agencies and problem areas. The other thought which could change the lifestyle of the people with disabilities is using technology in rehabilitation sector [Panday & Advani: 1995].
The persons with physical and mental disabilities of our country suffer from social, economic and psychological burden that needs to be understood in the right perspective by the policy makers, implementers and the society in general. This, disadvantaged, section of our society has to bear additional costs of disability, some of, which are difficult to compensate. The physical and attitudinal barriers they face and the additional expenditure they have to incur for management of their disability are a few dimensions of their hardship. The following factors, however, accentuate the state of poverty of a person with disability; they are lack of educational facilities including educational aids, shortage of trained and sensitive teachers, absence of barrier-free school, inadequate vocational training, lack of employment opportunities in terms of availability as well as reservation of jobs, absence of barrier free environment, low coverage of rehabilitation services by both government and non-government organisations, less sophisticated/manoeuvrable devices, ineffective implementation of reservation provisions in education and employment, and lack of earmarking of funds in related developmental activities for rural development [Mohapatra: 2004].

Another dimension of disability is women with disabilities. Sakshi Broota Hosamane, opines that women are over-protected, discriminated, exploited and marginalised. The rights movement of disabled women would require a lot more of nurturing, support, positive discrimination, equal opportunities and then empowerment and leadership. Being women with disability is considered as unfit to fulfil the role of homemaker, wife and mother, and attributed to the stereotype of beauty and femininity in terms of physical appearance. It is observed that medical, nutritional, educational, emotional, psychological, sexual, and recreational and employment needs of a disabled daughter are the last in the list of priorities of a family. Decisions regarding the lives of women in India are generally taken by their fathers, brothers or sons. And again, the intensity is higher in the case of women with disabilities [Deepa: 2006].
Inclusive education is a challenge to administration in the prevailing system in terms of physical structures, human resources, curriculum, teaching and communication media and methodologies, teaching and learning material, attitudes etc. The policy of inclusive education provides opportunities for all to develop a universal design which can include every one without exception. Inclusion of all children in ordinary schools can be true only when the process is started as a reform of the school and the education system as a whole [Puri, Abraham & George: 2004].

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education is a key objective of SSA and a path towards Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE). The UEE is based on three important aspects: access, enrolment and retention of all children in age group of 6-14 years. The goal of UEE, has further been facilitated by the Constitutional (86th Amendment) Act, that has made free and compulsory elementary education a Fundamental Right, for all the children in the age group of 6-14 years. This amendment has given a new thrust to the education of children with special needs because without their inclusion, the objective of UEE cannot be achieved. In fact inclusion of one of the groups which is extremely crucial for UEE, is perhaps that of the children with special needs [CWSN]. Hence, education of CWSN is a very important component of SSA. Under this project, a provision of Rs.1,200/- per child per year is allotted. The major components of this program are identification, functional and formal assessment, appropriate educational placement, preparation of Individualised Education Plan, provision of aids and appliances, teacher training, resource support, removal of architectural barriers, research, monitoring and evaluation and a special focus on girls with special needs [SSA: 2007].

Universal education is not an end in itself. It confers many benefits to society and the people. It leads to better awareness of rights and duties, and strengthens democracy. In a caste-ridden society like India, it raises the possibility of
providing equal opportunities to the downtrodden. But, it has been found that, at an all-India level, around 30-40 per cent of school-going children are unable to read simple text fluently [Sethi: 2005].

**Summing up**

This chapter enumerates that children with disabilities are excluded in the society in different ways. This exclusion resulted in keeping these children away from education system. The earlier education system was interested in special education because of the perception that the children with disabilities cannot cope with the society. But studies have shown that inclusive education can give them more support, help them develop the ability to understand and coping mechanisms with their peers and society. This chapter mentioned the benefits, methodologies and strategies to implement inclusive education policies in India. Hence, the proposed study would be different from above studies because the researcher is trying to understand the practical possibilities in regular schools. The researcher is also trying to understand the gap between the policies made and implemented in India in general and Andhra Pradesh in particular.

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