CHAPTER 5.2

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Theme 2: Challenges

In what follows, I present cases which helped me to effectively describe the social reality of an inclusive school and ascertain the challenges which the children with disabilities face in the school. The reason for selection of these case examples, out of many, is that they present to the reader a clear picture of my interpretative purposes, in examining how in India the policy of inclusive education is implemented in schools, and investigated whether some children are still marginalized, and if so, to identify factors supporting their marginalization and acting as a barrier to inclusion. These barriers could emanate from scarcity of resources, negative attitudes of teachers, non-disabled peers and their parents. There were three distinct categories under which the responses fell; attitudes which included attitudes and behaviour of peers and of regular teachers, shortage of resources and capacity building. We shall discuss the responses under to build the analytical framework.

5.2.1 Attitude and Behaviour of Peers

The peers in school, being the closest on par, play an important role in the lives of the children with disabilities. There is general support for the hypothesis that children who are not accepted by peers are generally at risk for difficulties later in life (Ochoa & Olivarez Jr., 1995). Acceptance by peers provides a much greater challenge for children with disabilities. Children with disabilities are often an easy target for being teased and bullied by their non-disabled peers as reported by children interviewed in this study (see also Nabuzoka and Smith
Recent research findings suggest that vulnerability to bullying cuts across all types of disability (Mishna 2003; Smith and Tippett 2006). Seven children interviewed found it difficult to make friends with the non-disabled peers because they were made fun of and bullied. The children commonly reflected that they wanted to be accepted and have more friends in the class who understand them and involve them in their talks and play.

While talking to Nikhil he revealed that there are only a few students who claim to be his friends. But he knows within that his so called friends are faking their friendly behaviour because either they want small favours from Nikhil or appreciation from the teachers on being good to a child with disability. He recalled an embarrassing moment when a friend discovered that he uses diapers. The friend threatened Nikhil of disclosing this to everyone in the class. Initially he was horrified but later he told him, “What you would have done if you were in my place” (Interview with Nikhil, 11 years, Spina Bifida).

Nikhil is extremely conscious of the fact that he uses diapers. He does not want other students in the class to know of this. He feels even more vulnerable after one of his friends has discovered it. There are not many people other than his family with whom he can share his worries. Other problems that he faces in the classroom are that of teasing and bullying. Some children from other classroom call him, “lame” or ask him to run with them in sports. Such remarks hurt him but he resigns to the fact that he is disabled and that he will have to face this
all through his life. The observations in the classroom supplemented what Nikhil and his
mother informed me.

Nikhil likes to make friends and shares good relationship with elder sister and his cousins.
He wants to mingle with everyone even with those to want to use him. He comes to school in
a car so many children want lift and therefore talk to him nicely. They are otherwise not
bothered and would not show any friendly gesture. Those relationships are rather superficial.
The other children have not accepted him completely. While children of his age call each
other and visit each other, no one involves Nikhil in these activities (Nikhil’s mother).

Observing the situation in the classroom, I could distinguish a certain apprehension in the
eyes of the teacher and the other children that was directed towards Nikhil. The teacher
avoided eye contact with Nikhil and concentrated on the delivery of the lesson planned for
that day. The other observation was that during lunchtimes Nikhil would have his lunch alone
in the classroom as other children went down to the ground floor.

Soham also reported some incidents which had hurt him emotionally and which makes him
feel that he does not have friends in the class. Apparently, there are two children in the class
who play with him secretly and tell him that they are his friends. However, in presence of
other children, they pretend that they are not his friends and mock at him. This signified that
the class does not approve of ‘friendship’ with children with disabilities. Even Gaurav
shared an incidents occurring in the classroom which make him angry and he resorts to
violence after that provocation. Minal (Gaurav’s Hindi teacher) informed that he is extremely
violent when he is angry. He hits other children, sometimes ruins the charts and other
decorations put up on the soft board in the fit of rage. On enquiring when does Gaurav
normally gets angry, she mentioned that many a times it is his own classmates who tease him.
Sania also has experienced similar bullying by classmates and other children in the school. The children derive pleasure out of the fact that they can easily pass on the blame to her as she cannot communicate properly. Her mother reported the incident at school (mentioned below) and few which happen at her home when some children come home on her birthday party or other occasions. The other children would make a mess in Sania’s room and later tell the mother that it was done by Sania.

_I do not like children in my class because many of them say that I am ‘stupid’ and that my brain does not work. I know that they do not like me and no one wants to be my friend. I have two friends in the class but they also tell me that we are your friends and in front of the class we will act as if we are not your friends (Soham, 10 years, Slow Learner)_

_They (classmates) know that I get angry easily because of my problem, however, they tease me to such an extent that I get angry. Sometimes they tell me, that Vaibhav (classmate) has made my cartoon in his English notebook or they complain to the teacher that I have not done my work or I am talking. They want me to get angry so that I get scolded by the teacher (Gaurav, 13 years, ADHD)._ 

_Sania wants to play with other kids in the school but other kids shun her. Because she is not able to speak, other kids make her scapegoat. They also do not involve her with their games or laugh at her. The school organized some games for an outdoor picnic. It was sheer insensitivity on part of school management to organize ‘dumbcharades’ and Chinese whisper. When someone would whisper something in her ear, Sania was not able to replicate the message. Even while doing actions for words, she would do something out of context and_
all children would laugh at her and say that ‘she is mad’. I witnessed everything because I had volunteered to help out the teachers (Sania's mother).

Despite the bullying and teasing the children with disabilities want to continue their friendship because they nurture a desire to have more friends. The mothers also avoid complaining against other classmates for the fact that then it might lead to ‘total rejection’ (Pamila, Sania’s mother) or ‘more bullying’ (Nikhil’s mother). However, some of the mothers had reported the matter to the Principal, resource teacher, and class teacher but they felt that the effect was temporary. Somewhere the issues like these were not taken cognizance of by the authorities. Pramila was concerned about the impact these issues may have on Sania as she is not able to ‘ventilate’. She expressed that she may know only ‘twenty five percent’ of what Sania faces.

The data suggests that bullying and classmate acceptance of children with disabilities is a serious challenge and has to be prevented for successful inclusion. The students with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to the peer victimization and anxiety about harassment bothers all children and their mothers.

5.2.2 Attitude of the Regular Teachers

Another strong barrier which the children perceived was the attitude of regular teachers. Several studies using both quantitative and qualitative studies have examined teachers’ beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions about students with disabilities and inclusive education (e.g. Agbenyega 2007; Wall, 2002; Opdal & Wormnaes, 2001; Balboni and Pedrabissi, 2000; Chiang, 1999; Cornoldi et al., 1998; Brantlinger, 1996; Minke et al., 1996; Villa et al., 1996;
Fulk & Hirth, 1994; Giangreco et al., 1993; Gerber, 1992). These studies conclude that attitudes and concerns of teachers affect their acceptance and commitment to implementing inclusion.

There were three general attitudes which surfaced from our interviews as being challenges for children with disabilities in inclusive schools. Firstly, regular teachers considered children with disabilities as the responsibility of the resource teachers. Secondly, they felt children with disabilities to be a ‘disturbance’ to the class and as causing distractions which delayed course completion. Finally, the lack of sensitivity on part of the regular teachers towards children with disabilities also acts as an attitudinal barrier. Therefore, they choose to ignore their presence and concentrate on execution of their lesson plans. The following quotes depict these three general attitudes which surfaced during interviews.

_I cannot waste the time of the entire class in giving special attention and guidance to Soham. I have to look after the interest of all my students. Besides, Soham gets remedial education at the Resource centre. The special teachers are there to look after his special needs._ (Class Teacher of Soham, 10 years, Slow Learner). [signifying that ‘Soham’ is responsibility of the resource teacher]

_I have no personal problem with Aakash but it is difficult to teach with him in the class. For how long, could one ignore his distractive behaviours. Sometimes, he taps his pencil on the table continuously. Some other time he is reading a different book in class. Sometimes he even starts to talk to himself. The other children in the class get distracted and a lot of time is wasted._ (Class Teacher of Aakash, 10 years, Aspergers Syndrome). [signifying that ‘Aakash’ is a disturbance to the class]
My teachers like me except my maths teacher. My maths teacher does not even understand me. He always asks my friend to repeat whatever I tell him. (Harshit, 15 years, Cerebral Palsy) [signifying ‘lack of sensitivity’]

The regular teachers do not cooperate with us from their side. It is always anyone amongst us who takes initiative and action for children with special needs. The child could really benefit if we teachers are able to work together. There is a great difference in our ideology in terms of dealing with children with special needs. (Resource teacher of a school which had nine resource teachers)

Soham’s class II teacher took pride in the fact that it was she who discovered that he was a slow learner. She mentioned it to me everytime I met her during Parent-teacher meetings. She talks about it even today when Soham has reached Std. IV (Uma, Soham’s mother)

Radhika (Simran’s mother) supports inclusion but she feels that there are some serious drawbacks. She has had some bitter experiences with the teachers who are simply ignorant and never attempt to understand that it is extremely difficult to do academic activities without vision. Some teachers think that Simran is using her blindness as an excuse. Simran has greater problems in understanding subjects like Algebra and Geography because there is an extensive usage of visual cues which do not translate well verbally. There are some teachers in school who obviously wish that they did not have to deal with a student who is blind, but there are some who do everything to make Simran a part of their class. Her role in subjects where the teachers are less cooperative increases considerably (summarised from Interview with Radhika).
These are the challenges faced by children with disabilities who have secured admission in inclusive schools. Children with disabilities aspiring to study in inclusive school have the greater challenge in their attempt to secure admission. The eligibility criteria of these schools are stringent; the nature and severity of disability is the foremost concern of the school authorities. It was observed that most inclusive schools only enrol children with mild disabilities. The schools also assess the parental support during the time of admission. They give preference when parents are willing to take on the extra responsibility for their child in terms of sharing the workload with the resource teachers (in some schools), meeting the child’s physical needs (if any), visiting the school regularly to monitor and facilitate child’s progress, and arranging transport (as there are few inclusive schools, in many cases the child’s home is distantly located) and the child is accordingly granted admission.

I looked at the general attitude of the peers and the regular teachers which acted as a barrier to inclusive education. Six out of ten children felt hurt and segregated by some interactions at school, particularly with regular teachers and peers. These attitudes could be categories as two kinds; intentional attitudinal barriers and unintentional attitudinal barriers (see also Pivik et al.2002).

Amongst the intentional attitudinal barriers, some of the students in the interviews reported instances of isolation, physical bullying, or emotional bullying. Isolation took the form of either being ignored or having difficulty building friendships. Physical bullying usually related to people pushing the student’s wheelchair without permission (as in case of Nikhil) or engaging in constant fights (as in case of Gaurav). The most frequent attitudinal barrier mentioned was that of emotional bullying. The students indicated that this was the most hurtful and included name calling, pointing, being labeled as “stupid,” condescending
attitudes by teaching staff, and generally being treated differently from other students. For example, Harshit reported that his peers “just stare at me and point and then whisper to each other . . . perhaps they discuss my disability.”

The unintentional attitudinal barriers related to a lack of knowledge, education, understanding, or effort on the part of the educational system or staff. From the entire sample, the most frequently reported barrier was a lack of understanding by teachers and support staff. This took the form of being given inappropriate substitute work when the other students engaged in something that was a limitation for the child with disability. When the whole class was busy practicing for the sports day, Rakhi was made to sit in the library and study or when the students go to the gymnasium or dance class Nikhil is sent for the remedial class. The children liked to engage in equally interesting activity during the time others engaged in co-curricular activities in which they could not participate. Nikhil’s mother shared that he faces problems on an everyday basis as all his efforts to cope in a regular school despite the numerous problems are never acknowledged or appreciated. The mother was worried about the attitude of the regular teachers who would never go a step forward to include Nikhil in the activities of the class. This leads her to wonder whether the ‘inclusion’ process is a one-sided effort. She suggested that there could be some group counseling sessions which may lead to better acceptance by the students and fight these unintentional attitudinal barriers. I would like to present the case of Nikhil in greater detail to bring out the issues involved.

Nikhil’s mother was made a part of these deliberations and inquired about the challenges her idea of ‘inclusive school’. The highlights from the interview would bring out certain concerns and issues for building the discourse further. Nikhil studied in another renowned school in the city earlier. He was the only child who suffered from a disability. Though the school had
lifts and some the physical support for the child, they were unwilling to let him continue in
the same school after class VII. They reasoned that they were short of some basic resources
like a resource room or ancillary staff to help Nikhil. The mother had made up her mind to
find a regular school for her child and therefore, approached many schools for his admission.
Unfortunately, no school was ready to admit her child because of his physical disability. She
disappointedly noted that though Nikhil has average intelligence, he was never given a fair
and equal chance at school.

The experiences of a previous school were shared in the process bringing some facts to the
forefront. The schools are hesitant to take responsibility of a child with disability. Their
unwillingness and negative attitude deter parents to keep the child in the same school. In the
first place, no school admits a child with disability to their school and even if they allow
him/her admission there are problems in continuing with the school. The abilities of the child
were sidelined and ignored by the school, what mattered to the school was his ‘disability’.

Due to this he became demotivated and has become apathetic to studies. He displayed mood
swings and resorted to excessive video gaming. The mother blamed this to his adolescent age.
The parents face a lot of worries about his future. They know that there is lot of struggle
ahead. Nikhil is good is science and he wants to pursue his interest but there is little hope that
he would be able to continue studying science. At higher level of education he may or may
not get the support he needs.

The Principal of the earlier school was not very encouraging about Nikhil and many times
counseled parents to send their child to special school. The parents believed and insisted that
Nikhil attends a regular school as he was faring well in studies. The parents also had to put
their patience to test when their child was used as an ‘exhibit’. During a sports day function
the Principal would go and pose with Nikhil in front of the Press to prove that the school
gives equal opportunity to all his children. He was given a small role on stage everytime
during an annual function so that the other parents would appreciate the efforts of school in
providing a chance to a child with disability as well.

The parents have had experience of school of high repute which boasts of their inclusive
culture in their brochures, but denied admission to Nikhil. They tend to equate a physical
disability with a mental disability which is very disheartening for the parents and the child.
The following extracts from the interview with the mother had reported an incident and
recommended strategies to help her child continue ‘willingly and happily’ in the school.

In the current school, the child should be given chance to participate in all academic and
extra-curricular activities of the school. The child was discouraged to stand for elections in
the school. The mother however felt that this was injustice done to him. If given a chance he
could prove his leadership skills. There is a lot of bullying. This particular school where the
child was studying lacks strict discipline. Children are over-friendly with their teachers
which is good in some sense but the children should be taught some discipline. Due to this
indiscipline, the child with a disability suffers more. The child has learnt lot of violence, he
hits his classmates and vice versa. Many a times, he would gravely hurt himself while
indulging in fights. The mother is confused at this behavior, one hand it has made him tough
and he is learning to fight while on the other he is engaging in misbehavior.

I suggest that a few sessions with the entire class by regular teachers and counselors could
help in better acceptance of the child in school. At the beginning of the new session all the
children should be given a chance to introduce them to their friends in the classroom wherein
they could share their abilities and differences. This may help in better understanding of the
problems that a child with differential ability faces in a regular classroom (Nikhil’s mother).
When this vignette was analyzed for emergent findings, I came across some barriers to effective inclusive school systems. The parents had a bad experience with previous schools where the child was asked to discontinue due to his disability. Nevertheless, these schools would lose out on an opportunity to gain popularity as inclusive schools in presence of media or other school events. Even in the classroom what appeared was a situation of non-acceptance by the peers and the teacher. The child would sit alone in the classroom during lunch hours and even during class sessions he would be excluded from the peer conversations and play. Nikhil was not allowed to contest school elections due to the nature of his disability. The children with disabilities are constantly exposed to these challenges which may cause a negative outcome (more in the chapter on Outcomes).

If we look at the section which I have presented there is an evident catch. In my study the children with severe disabilities, Nikhil and Rakhi face greater attitudinal problems from their peers than say children with less apparent disabilities like Soham and Gaurav. ‘Regardless of context or age of participants, society tends to view the physically attractive as inherently better than those of less physical attractiveness’ (Patzer 1985; Erwin 1993). Physical attractiveness does unfortunately also play an important role when it comes to making friends. Though none of the non-disabled peers mentioned it, the children with disabilities were concerned about the physical appearance and athletic competence as factors affecting their friendships and inculcating negative attitudes amongst their classmates (more details in ‘Outcomes’).

For teachers however greater attitudinal problems arise when the children with disabilities pose instructional problems. Though again not specifically mentioned by any of the teachers, their examples had names of children with disabilities who either disturb the proceedings of the class or require extra instructions/special attention during activities.
5.2.3 Shortage of Resources

This study contends that the resources owned by the school facilitate the inclusion process of children disabilities, their absence however does not deter inclusion (see also Stubbs, 1997; Alur 2006). A particular impairment in a child restricts his ability to perform if the environment is not conducive. I will share the experiences of the children who participated in the study and faced challenges sometimes on an everyday basis in the school. Nikhil has some specific needs. If those needs are met he could continue in the regular school as any other child with least problems.

*It was a pre-lunch hour in July 2008 soon after I began my data collection in schools. I was waiting for the Special Teacher to introduce me to some children who had gathered near the front office at her behest. One of the children who came was Nikhil, accompanied by his driver who volunteered to help him during school as an attendant. After our introductions, the special teacher told me that he is an average student but they could not have admitted him to the school without an assistant. She informed, “It is very difficult for the school to meet his needs. His complete immobility makes him completely dependent on the assistant”.*

*Nikhil needs architectural friendliness. The broad corridor and few ramps could enhance his mobility in school. He undergoes emotional distress which often goes unnoticed by the regular teachers.*

A school would be able to successfully include Nikhil only when they have adequate infrastructure and organization. Nikhil was admitted to the school only on the condition that the parents provide for an attendant during school hours to help him commute between classrooms. This points towards the inadequacy of the school to make its own arrangements
to help the child. This means that a child hailing from a family which could afford providing a full-time attendant may experience inclusive environment while other children may not.

The human resource is a major constraint. Six out of the seven schools had only one resource and all the Principals expressed their concerns over it. They felt that more number of resource teachers could facilitate the process. One of the resource teacher mentioned that, “my job profile is very different from the regular teachers. I am required to give more time to student but I feel constrained due to excess workload”.

Some teachers and resource teachers also felt that appointment of ancillary staff for children who are wheelchair users would be welcome gesture from the school. Other resources like availability of school transport could help some of the students who are located distantly from the school. I must reiterate here that the city of Mumbai is a metropolis with large number schools (for details refer chapter 4.1) out of which very few are inclusive. Also, the public transport is not disabled friendly (for eg. see Shetty 2006), the architecture of the local stations and the models of the buses encourage the children with disabilities to make self-arrangements like a personal car or an assistant to help them reach school.

5.2.4 Capacity Building

Out of the twenty regular teachers, fifteen felt that they were not trained for handling children with disabilities in the classrooms. They expressed that even when they wished to help children with disabilities in their respective classes they felt inadequately qualified to do so. They desired to learn more about inclusive education. To quote few teachers who expressed concerns like these are mentioned below.
I have done my regular teacher education. It does not equip me to deal with child with disability. I do not know what to do with him. I feel frustrated.

I am not trained to teach children with disabilities. They have been forced on us. It wastes the time of the entire class (Dhara, Regular teacher, School 3)

Though we keep having these trainings at our school, I do not think it is sufficient for us to handle children with special needs. The manifestations of these needs are so varied, there are no ready solutions. Our minds do not work like resource teachers.

During my discussions with the regular teachers, Ms. Gauhar (Sania’s teacher) provided additional information which contributed a great deal in interpreting the proceedings. Ms. Gauhar informed that she did not feel equipped to handle a ‘special child’. She considered it to be the job of a special teacher. She did have a very cordial relationship with the Special Teacher; she felt the special teacher was more of an ‘interfering kind’.

The interviews with regular teachers revealed that the teachers did not have appropriate exposure in dealing with children with disabilities during their pre-service training and therefore, lacked appropriate attitude and sensitivity. The teacher training courses across India are varied and approach inclusive education from the ‘deficit perspective’. Apart from an optional paper on ‘children with special needs’ there are no formal inputs on inclusive education which could prepare the teachers to handle diversity in the classrooms (Singal 2005 cited in Giffard-Lindsay 2007). The standard Bachelor in Education programme has a course on educating children with special needs in India. However, teachers when confronted with the practical challenge of teaching in inclusive classes lacked the skills to deal with the
situation and mostly ignored children with disabilities as being the responsibility of the resource teachers alone. Most (15 out of 20 teachers) teachers interviewed during the study expressed their inability to deal with children with disabilities. Thus, the concern of inadequate training of teachers to handle diversity in their classroom emerges. Specifically, in numerous surveys, teachers have reported that they have insufficient skills and training to adequately serve students with special needs (see also Lieber et al., 2000; Schumm et al., 1995; Houck & Rogers, 1994; Schumm & Vaughn, 1991; Semmel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar, 1991). To facilitate confidence and competence, teachers need systematic and intensive training that includes research-based best practices in inclusive schools. Moreover, critical to sustained change is staff development that is ongoing and participatory, for example, establishing study groups, teacher collaboratives, and long-term partnerships (Little, 1993; Wenitzky, Stoddart, & O’Keefe, 1992).

During the analytical process which began almost simultaneously with data collection, teacher training started emerging as a very vital issue in terms of handling children with disabilities in the classrooms. Therefore, in order to strengthen this component in the research the teacher trainees of an ‘Integrated teacher training course’ which is one of its kind in India were interviewed and perspectives were also obtained from the Director and teaching staff of the institution.

This course upholds that all children are special and may have variations in capacities and talents, pace of learning, extent and limits to learning, and inputs needed for their learning. It was considered necessary to adopt a unitary approach to education, where teaching and training fell within the same organizational system and structure to incorporate the planning of schools and the professional development of teachers. The course addresses the
educational needs of children as well as the professional needs of teachers. The course aimed
to develop knowledge of diverse needs, disabilities and giftedness, appropriate skills, ability
to teach at elementary level in multiple settings amongst the aspiring teachers.

It was interesting to find out what motivated the teacher trainees to opt for the course. There
were twelve teacher trainee enrolled for the course. Though some of them were not sure what
motivated them to join the course, few drew inspiration from earlier unsuccessful experiences
with children with disabilities and a couple of them had someone in the family who had
suffered due to insensitivity of the educational system due to their disability. Nonetheless, all
mentioned that they were confident about dealing with children with disabilities in the regular
classrooms after this training. My interview and experience with the teacher trainees just
strengthened the direct relationship between the pre-service training and the attitude of the
teachers. The statement by one of the teachers which summarizes the following quotes and
the discussion to quite an extent is, “because we have knowledge we look at the “special”
children as “normal”. The other teachers however, see them as different and a liability”.

When I was teaching in a school, I had an ADHD child in the class. He was unlike normal
children so I did not know how to handle the child and therefore I was looking out for a
course which would equip me with the expertise to handle such children. I really had a tough
time handling the ADHD child. She would show variable behaviour, today she will drop a
table, tomorrow she would run around the school, she would think that it is a playground.
For being a good teacher you require immediate reaction which was earlier absent in me
(narration by a teacher trainee).

Earlier we used to get scared looking at such children, now we it is normal to have such
difficulties and we feel equipped to handle children with special needs in the classroom
(Teacher trainee , .
Our faculty always stress that it is not that our curriculum is very different from the regular teacher training curriculum it is just that it is taught differently. There the focus is some children while we focus on all children. The similarities in children are many and differences are only few (one of teacher trainee).

It was interesting to find Tripti, a regular teacher with School 5 who had undergone training as an ‘integrated teacher’. She shared that the training curriculum has helped to face all children in the classrooms. She was mostly concerned about the attitudes of the teachers towards the children with disabilities. She felt that they relied on the resource teachers even for things they could have easily addressed in the classroom settings.

I truly feel blessed to have undergone integrated teacher training. It has prepared me to handle all children in my class, unlike the other teachers. I often share my learning with the other teachers but they do not seem interested. I am concerned about the children with disabilities enrolled with us. Except the principal and few teachers, no one actually cares for them (Tripti, School 5)

Thus, capacity building of the teachers emerged as an important concern. It could help in combating negative attitudes, help them acquire essential knowledge and develop relevant skills for handling diversity in their classrooms.

5.2.5 Conclusion

Through this research three main challenges surfaced in the inclusive set-ups. I have endeavoured to depict them diagrammatically (figure 5.2.1) for a vivid understanding. The biggest share of the challenges was negative attitudes of the regular teachers and peers (see also Stubbs 1997). The reason for this suggestion is that all the Principals mentioned that that they were actually struggling to bring about an attitudinal change in the regular teachers. One
of the Principals dramatically put forward this concern as the “Sensitivity, Sensitivity and Sensitivity, these are the only three things I require from my teachers to help the school function better”. The Resource teachers (8 out of 12) also mentioned that the attitude of the regular teachers needs to undergo a change for collaboration and planning better outcomes for children with disabilities.

The smaller share is given to resources and capacity building in terms of illustrating priority not magnitude. The schools are functioning with some resources and there is little doubt over the fact that some additional resources could prove extremely beneficial; whether we consider human resources like resource teachers or material resources like teaching aids and enhancing accessibility. One of the schools had employed nine resource teachers and certainly was doing better in terms of number of children with disabilities and quality of remedial teaching provided. Even the mothers from that school experienced less burdened with academic activities.

Figure 5.2.1 Challenges faced in inclusive school
The other challenge was the pre-service and in-service training of the regular teachers. The capacity building is sure to bring about the necessary attitude change as well (Beh-Pajooh1992; Shimman 1990) and thus the arrow showing the relationship. The two concepts of resources and capacity building are also related. The training shall also strengthen the human resource component and facilitate understanding of minimal use of resources for inclusion.

When a school introduces an inclusive environment, it would be beneficial for at least the teachers who would be handling inclusive classes to be given some orientation to equip them to deal with relevant situations. The individual schools might find it beneficial to organise special training workshops at regular intervals for teachers who might be interested and involved with children with disabilities could improve satisfactory outcomes for both the children and the school. In fact prior to planning the training sessions, there could be training needs analysis which would identify areas in which the teachers seek help. At the macro level, as more public and private schools might be interested in becoming inclusive, the teachers training curriculum could include a special module to train on inclusive education. This module might also provide an internship period in inclusive schools. The government bodies responsible for designing teacher education curriculum is National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and National Council for Education, Research and Training (NCERT). There have been recent attempts to redesign the teacher education curriculum to respond to changing educational context and a Draft Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education in India (2006) has been published (the website currently displays the draft document for discussion, retrieved from http://www.education.nic.in/Elementary/NCFTE-31.08.2009.pdf on 2nd Sept. 2009). However, this may take a long time to get finalised and implemented as other policy documents.
This theme has identified a number of important systemic barriers to implementing inclusive education. The elucidation of the challenges of inclusive education in the given context would help us in constructing the model which could affect practice. The clear understanding of these issues helps in formulating and implementing concrete strategies to effect real and lasting change.