CHAPTER 5.3

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Theme 3: Process of Inclusive Education

The framework for the analysis of the process of inclusive education was adapted from the Index of Inclusion designed by Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow (2002). There are three dimensions of the inclusive education process—Cultures, Policies and Practices. The process of inclusion involves the experiences of the staff, students, parents and the community. The data generated from the schools in Mumbai were fed into the analytical framework; the consequential findings are herein presented.

5.3.1 CULTURES

The first dimension is that of Cultures; it requires upholding the beliefs and values that create a secure, accepting, collaborating and stimulating community for all students (National Curriculum Council 2002). Paula Kluth (2005) suggests that school philosophy or mission statement must support inclusive education. All the schools which admitted children with disabilities had committed themselves to the philosophy aligning with inclusive education. The philosophical statements concern the overall goals for the organisation. These statements must reflect that the school takes responsibility of the children with varying needs and abilities and shall endeavour to provide a stimulating educational environment to all its learners.

Some examples which truly align with the inclusive philosophy have been presented below. The first two quotes have specifically laid out their inclusive philosophy through statements like “student’s schedule to be tailored to his special needs, strengths and interests”. The
mission statement of School 1 is quite comprehensive and takes into account the special needs of the children and achieving excellence through an inclusive development programme. Similarly School 3 emphasizes the worth of every child and its learning abilities. This is much in alignment with the child right philosophy embodied in the Convention of the Rights of the Child which upholds that all children can learn and must be provided equal opportunities.

The course and the system of education at the school allow a student’s schedule to be tailored to his special needs, strengths and interests [emphasis added]. Excellence in education through an all round inclusive development programme is the guiding belief of ‘the school’. The main objective is to propagate & advance education to the fullest possible degree, by incorporating quality principles in all areas (School 1).

The school philosophizes that every child has equal worth and can learn [emphasis added]. Children learn best when they are in emotionally secured environment and all individual needs of the child must be addressed utilizing the multiple intelligences (School 3).

The school garners a belief that learning is a shared responsibility between students, teachers and parents. Learning should be meaningful, relevant and life-long for the learner and teacher. The school should feed the child’s innate curiosity, stimulate creativity and concern through actual hands-on developmentally appropriate experience and reflection (School 4).

Some of the schools however remained silent on inclusive issues despite practicing inclusion. There is an ambiguity in the philosophical statement of School 3 with respect to inclusion; it
is unclear whether the term “every child” signifies all children in general including children with disabilities or it meant every child enrolled in the school. For instance School 4 centers the learner and does not categorically spell out ‘child with special needs’ or ‘all learners’. The table 5.3.1 illustrates the usage of the inclusive terminologies by the schools in their mission statements.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inclusive Terminology</th>
<th>“Children with Special Needs”</th>
<th>“All learners”</th>
<th>“Inclusive Environment”</th>
<th>“Every child can learn”</th>
<th>“Equal worth”</th>
<th>General philosophical statements</th>
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These statements acquire special importance as during the interviews with the Heads of the Schools, they often cited the school’s guiding philosophy and how it has affected their functioning and administration.

*I derive my strength from our school’s philosophy and often quote it in staff and parent meetings to reiterate our belief systems and motivating the staff* (Principal, School 1)

*As you have read, our school believes that every child can learn and we abide by this simple yet most powerful statement. It guides us make appropriate policies, to acquire the necessary*
resources and sensitivity required to manage an inclusive statements. We practice what we uphold (Principal, School 3)

The indicators of inclusive culture as proposed in the index of inclusion were “Building Community”. The more specific implications which emerged were whether the first contact of the student or the parent or the community was welcoming and friendly, and there were indications of positive rituals for the welcome or marking their leaving.

In most of the schools (5 out of 7), a seminar or a welcome event is organized at the beginning of the new session. In some schools the parents are also invited for the event where the school’s inclusive philosophy is reiterated through speech, role plays, empathy exercises etc. to educate the students and parents (in some cases). The School Principals believed that it was an extremely benefitting exercise and it helped the students to be more responsive to their peers with special needs. The children with disabilities also felt welcomed through this initiative of the school. The two schools which did not organize annual event like this at the beginning ensured that the newly admitted students and their parents had been briefed about the school’s stance on inclusion and clarified to the parents whatever concerns they had regarding this. Mostly the concerns that the parents of the non-disabled peers raised were related to the fact that whether such an arrangement is practical and if it implied any harm to their children’s academic interests. Such concerns were addressed at the beginning by the Principals and in some cases the Counselors or Resource Teachers employed with the school. Nonetheless, despite an orientation these issues crop up many times during an academic year and such sessions are conducted whenever the need arises.
The Principals of the school were ‘torchbearers’ of inclusion (see also Singal 2008). Their commitment towards including children with disabilities in their school, their effort to sensitize the teachers through personal meetings and training, their concern about the sustenance of the child whom they have enrolled and personally looking their matters were significantly pointing towards their dedication to the cause.

The Principal of School 1 had adopted the “open door policy”, which meant that her doors were deliberately kept open for the parents, teachers and students. She said that it helps to address concerns which sometime arise on an everyday basis. She believes that if people get into the intricacies of taking appointments then people tend to avoid or blanket the issue. She is of the opinion that it has kept her more informed and aware about the school issues and rendered her more approachable and democratic.

There were many indicators in the Index which did not have a ‘data match’. Let us discuss those to understand what was missing from the ‘cultures’. Some of the indicators which feature in the “establishing inclusive cultures” section were, high expectations for all students, all students are equally valued, staff seek to remove barriers to learning and participation in all aspects of the school and the school strives to minimise discriminatory practices (details in Appendix III). Though there were no evidences on abstract indicators of whether the schools have high expectations from all learners or value the learners equally from this research, the theme on ‘Challenges’ discussed the barriers which exist in the school and not many efforts directed towards addressing those concerns. It is interesting to note that though the school has an inclusion policy and some support mechanisms are in place, there are some ‘latent’ influences which perpetuate discriminatory practices. I have a reason to call these influences ‘latent’ as the school culture and authorities
do not approve of them and if brought to notice, they take stringent actions like for instance in case of ‘bullying’ the parents of the accused child are called and warned that repeated activities like these could result in expulsion (School 1), or if the regular teacher refuse to take responsibility or shows indifference then a memo is issued (School 5). However, these barriers continue to exist in the school situation despite the measures adopted by the principals in case of non-compliance.

5.3.2 POLICIES

The second dimension is that of Policies; which entails the introduction of explicit aims for promoting inclusion in school development plans and other guidelines for practice in the management, teaching and learning in the schools (National Curriculum Council 2002).

The first step towards sustaining inclusion by the schools was the recruitment and staff development programmes. All the seven Principals emphasized that they ensure that the newly recruited teachers fit the desired criteria of an ‘inclusive teacher’. All the principals believed that the new teachers take special interest in children with disabilities and sometimes are successful in involving them and satisfying the parents of the children with disabilities. However, with time a few Principals reported that their enthusiasm dies down. Some of the reasons which I got as explanations to this were; “the experienced staff color their perception” (Principal, School 3), “the extra effort becomes burdensome” (Principal, School 1) or “the probation time is over” (Principal, School 5).

I normally get a good response from the new teachers. They try to follow instructions, collaborate with the resource teachers and do a fine job. The parents of children with disabilities have expressed this often in personal meetings with me. (Principal, School 4)
The recruitment policy in all schools gives preference to pre-service training (it is not a mandatory requirement), years of experience, skill set, personal characteristics of the teacher which can be assessed during interviews like willingness to teach ‘all’ learners, professionalism, way of communication and confidence (summarized from the interviews with the principals).

Five out of the seven schools believe in staff-development through periodic in-service training ranging from two to five times in a year on various aspects of teaching-learning. At least one workshop deals specifically for teaching children with disabilities and maximizing their involvement in class. The five principals strongly believed that these in-service workshops and training helps the teachers for better classroom management, advancing their teaching skills and handling diversity. Some of the training programmes conducted by the schools for the regular teachers were entitled, “Enhancing sensitivity”, “involving children with special needs”, “Make every child learn” etc. The two school principals who did not organize these in-service trainings for the teachers expressed shortage of resources. They however encouraged their teachers to participate in external short-term trainings offered by other institutions.

5.3.3 PRACTICES

The third and the final dimension is that of **Practices** which calls for practices that reflect inclusive school cultures and policies by ensuring that classroom and extra-curricular activities encourage the participation of all students and draw on their knowledge and experience outside school (National Curriculum Council 2002). This dimension was the most concrete and tangible. We will attempt to look at practices adopted by the school and the
teachers in details so as to understand the ‘process of inclusive education’. The Principal (School 5), summarized the practices as; “the teachers are trained to be receptive and nonjudgmental, student centered environment that encourages independence is created and learning is be centered around each student’s individual learning style student”. Before, we consider the practices it would pertinent to look at the curriculum which is followed in the schools.

5.3.3.1 Curriculum

Curriculum is what is learned and what is taught (context); how it is delivered (teaching-learning methods); how it is assessed (exams, for example); and the resources used (UNESCO 2004). All the schools were following the “formal curriculum,” on a prescribed set of educational outcomes or goals. Because this formal curriculum may be prescribed by authority, teachers feel constrained and often implement it rigidly. Teachers feel that they cannot make changes to or decisions about this type of prescribed curriculum including the predetermined textbook selection. As a result teachers are bound to teaching from the textbook and to the “average” group of students. It often becomes essential as the system examination and performance oriented which the students must pass. The teacher success is also measured by students’ performance on these examinations.

The included schools were following the ICSE and CBSE curriculum, however a couple of the schools had parallel teaching for the NIOS Board. The National Open School (NOS) was set up by the Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) in 1989 with a view to provide education through distant mode to those who cannot attend regular schools. Since its inception, the NOS discharged the responsibility to promote the entire range of school education through open learning system in the country. It performed a
significant role for defining standards in open schooling, experimenting with innovations, assisting State level organisations with professional resource support and expertise, and dissemination of tested innovations, curriculum and materials. In July 2002, the National Open School (NOS) was re-christened as the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS).

For programme delivery, NIOS had adopted multi-media approach. The Self Learning Materials are provided to all enrolled students in printed form. The NIOS books of Secondary stage have been put on the Internet. CDs of NIOS books are available at a price. The Audio Cassettes of NIOS are particularly useful for blind students. The Media programmes of NIOS are telecast and broadcast regularly every month. The audio and video cassettes are made available to the Study Centres of NIOS.

The most significant barriers to learning for learners in a regular schools is the curriculum as expressed by the regular teachers. The barriers to learning arise from different aspects of the curriculum, such as the content (what is taught), the language or medium of instruction, how the classroom or lecture is organised and managed, the methods and processes used in teaching, the pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum, the learning materials and equipment that is used and how learning is assessed. The evaluation of child’s performance in school is done through examination and periodic class tests. For children with disabilities, some concessions are offered in all schools e.g. extra time, provision of writers etc. In one school (School 1), separate question papers are set for children with disabilities in consonance with their IEPs. In many of the schools the children with disabilities were exempted from doing one language if there were difficulties in language and communication. Some teachers also preferred to take oral tests for children with writing problems.
5.3.3.2 Pedagogy

The next relevant issue is the pedagogy adopted in the inclusive schools. The pedagogical experience for children in inclusive schools is indeed a different one. All learners have to make part of the teaching–learning exercise. Mitler (2000) contends that inclusive pedagogy is not an appendage to poor pedagogy; the initial point has to be good pedagogy.

Amongst the twenty regular teachers who were interviewed, fifteen of them informed that there is no specific pedagogy that they adopt for children with disabilities in the classroom. However, five out of them made specific reference of children with disabilities in their daily lesson plans and tried to introduce the topic in a simpler manner so that it is universally followed. These teachers endeavored to make some modifications in their teaching style in order to involve everyone. The schools adopt tailor made practices for their enrolled children with disabilities. There are no uniform set of guidelines to guide pedagogy and curriculum for the children. It is “more on a case to case basis” (Principal, School 2).

This pedagogical component was found to include successful classroom management, effective instructional techniques and appropriate accommodative practices. It would be interesting to present each of these with illustrations from the experiences of children and teachers. The areas covered are diagrammatically represented in Figure 5.3.3.2 for clear understanding of related concepts.
Every classroom environment has several elements that have a profound impact on effectiveness of instruction and learning (Doyle 1986). One important element which emerged from this study was the physical management. The arrangement of all classrooms were observed and found to be ‘traditional expository teaching seating plan’ (Loreman, Deppler and Harvey 2006), where children were seated in rows of tables and desks facing the teacher who provides instruction from the front. Teachers thought carefully about allotting seats to the children with disabilities. Seating the children with disabilities in the front row was a common practice across schools. For example, for Tanmay the first major consideration is the ‘Seating’. He occupies a permanent place in the first row near the teacher. Berry (1995) also suggested that the children with hearing impairment must be positioned to avail advantages of all visual cues.
The other issue concerning physical management was that of ‘accessibility’. This surfaced with regards to Nikhil and Rakhi who use wheelchair. In the schools where these children studied the classrooms were cramped and there was not enough space to move about. This meant that they are mostly stationed at one place throughout the day. However, the door space was large enough for entry with wheelchairs.

Another important area of classroom management was management of those specific behaviours which may disrupt classroom environment. Here I would like to present Gaurav’s case which would elucidate how behavior management techniques are being effectively used. 

Gaurav was diagnosed with Attention deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The school faces the following problems with Gaurav quite often (Preeti, Resource teacher )-

- Inability to perform everyday tasks/distractibility
- Impairment to control impulses/impulsivity
- Restlessness/hyperactivity

The Resource teacher in the school had regular sessions with the child and according to the parents it has helped to some extent. She even helped the parents and arranged several counseling sessions for the parents. It was she who carried out initial assessments and referred the Gaurav to the psychiatrist. Gaurav was helped through the group management techniques employed with the help of the resource teacher, classroom teacher and school counsellor. For implementation, the classroom rules are explained to the class and also displayed with the help charts and the consequences for breaking the rules. The resource teacher and counsellor informed that it is possible to enforce two-three rules at any point in time. Depending on the behaviour Gaurav displayed in the classroom, the rules were changed. The rule most strictly adhered to was ‘no aggressive/violent behaviour’. Gaurav had a short temperament and had gravely hurt some of his classmates in the past. The students are
positively reinforced through “smiley’s and stars” when there are no occurrences of fights. The entire class was made responsible for Gaurav’s behavior and if anyone indulged in provocative behavior was punished. Though this had reduced the frequency of unfavourable events in the classroom it had not completely stopped.

It was observed that most of the unsolicited behaviours were reported during the free time or lunch time. Gaurav was therefore strictly instructed to report to the resource room during ‘free times’ and ‘recess’. The resource teacher usually gave him some activity or allowed him to access the computer. He usually found it interesting and sometimes got a couple of his friends to the resource room to play with him.

The resource teacher had instructed the regular teachers on certain ground rules for Gaurav’s class, scheduling activities to be completed within the given time, not to assign any other activity if the student finishes before allotted time, he is assigned a group where his friends belong, use behavior management techniques with Gaurav and provide him with positive feedback.

In consultation with the mother target behaviours were determined for instance, when I was around the mother had complained that Gaurav did not finish his lunch. The resource teacher and the counsellor then set this target for that week. If Gaurav finished his lunch during recess, she made a note in his diary. Generally, the classroom teacher stayed in the class during recess and therefore they requested her to be attentive with Gaurav. If he continued to show good behavior for the entire week, the resource teacher allowed him to access the computer for half hour. During that week he finished his lunch four times in six working days of the week.
Sometimes a particular positive reinforcer fails to work. I therefore, believe in involving the child when the reinforcer is decided so that he is motivated to sustain good behavior. Till now it has worked wonders (Preeti, Resource teacher).

Gaurav’s mother was also involved in planning activities for him so that she could even engage him at home. She visited the school at least twice a week to appraise and assist the resource teacher. Gaurav’s mother also handed over the responsibility of administering medication to him. The resource teacher has scheduled an alarm for the same and makes him have his medicines.

The medication has helped to control his unsolicited behaviours and improve his concentration (Preeti, Resource teacher).

Gaurav thus, sustained in the school through a support network created by the resource teacher, counselor, mother and to some extent by the regular teachers. The case illustrated how practice entailed increasing desirable behaviours, decreasing undesirable behaviours, promoting generalization and maintenance and enhancing self-management.

Sania’s mother provided many examples (one presented below) as to how the resource teacher had been helping Sania to continue in the school. According to the mother the other teachers were ‘apathetic’ to her and she does not even have many friends. The resource teacher had been an instrumental in the entire process of helping Sania to learn the language, help with the curriculum and other concerns.

One day Sania just refused to go to the school. She would throw tantrums in getting up early for school and would cry. When this continued for two-three days, the mother shared it with
the resource teacher. The resource teacher made a behavioural contract with Sania. She said that if you come to school and will not make your mother angry in the morning for three consecutive days, you will be given a “treasure”. She would ensure going to Sania’s classroom in the morning and ask if I was ‘happy’ (the teacher uses a sign) or ‘sad’ in the morning and would confirm with me when I visited the school in the afternoon. Sania’s behavior improved a great deal after this exercise (Sania’s mother).

Thus, the behavior management for children with undesirable behaviours is often initiated by the resource teacher. Nevertheless, for effective management and maintenance it is important to involve the regular teachers and parents as well as it was evident from the case examples.

5.3.3.2 b Instructional Techniques

All of the dimensions discussed in this chapter are associated with instructional outcomes. However, here the focus is specifically on the instructional techniques which may help the children with disabilities in regular classrooms. Not only did the resource teachers used multisensory techniques for children with disabilities in the resource room setting, they also encouraged the regular teachers to employ certain instructional techniques in the classroom.

As part of my responsibility I share and sporadically reiterate what will work with him in the classroom situation. She had instructed the teachers to “provide short clear instructions, keep their faces visible to Tanmay, avoid movement in the classroom, try to speak clearly and ‘normally’, use lot of gestures and facial expressions, use of charts, writing on the blackboard, and occasionally check on Tanmay.” (Tanmay’s resource teacher)
Despite the instructions and initiative taken by the resource teacher she informed that the major responsibility of Tanmay is shared between the mother and her. During the remedial class conducted twice a week, she works on his subjects. She often has to make Tanmay wait after his school hours for completing the course. She uses interactive mathematical games and computers to teach him.

The resource teachers were seen taking considerable responsibilities of these children and devising ways and means to facilitate instruction in classroom. I would like to exemplify it through another case example. Aakash’s resource teacher, Richa had communicated certain behaviours and strategies for the classroom to the regular teachers who teach Aakash. She recommended that the teachers must provide warning before suddenly switching over to other activities. She reminded teachers about using simple and clear language rather using complex phrases which might cause confusion to Aakash. Generally, the teacher provided Aakash with simple instructions individually. The resource teacher commented that the regular teachers are not consistent with their ways of teaching and including Aakash in all the activities.

The instructional techniques may vary according to the need of the child, however were some common instructional techniques like learning in groups which some of the schools actively used and favoured. Some teachers mentioned that learning in groups is effective for all students ad especially useful for children with disabilities.

**5.3.3.2c Remedial Teaching**

Remedial teaching was a universal phenomenon for all children with disabilities. All the children attend remedial classes by the resource teacher. Three children, Harshit, Ishita and Soham attended remedial sessions after school hours and remained in the classrooms for
entire day. The educational problems of these children were looked after by the Resource teachers and there were no specific techniques which the resource teachers followed. They used lot of activity based learning, computers and interactive learning techniques with the students during remedial teaching.

With Aakash, the resource teacher made following attempts when he visited the resource room-

- Giving him clear guidelines on what activities they will be carrying out in the scheduled time.
- Specific teaching of social rules/skills, such as eye contact and social distance.
- Encourages computer based learning as Aakash enjoys learning using the computer.
- Sometimes when she is free she sits with Aakash in the classroom and helps him with some activities.
- She also had educated the classroom peers about his condition and encourages them to help him.

These examples are indicative of the role of the resource teachers in the process of education delivery for the enrolled children with disabilities. Their understanding of the disabilities and associated needs help them to facilitate learning.

### 5.3.3.3 Accommodative Practices

These practices are additional to the curriculum and pedagogical practices wherein some extra efforts are made for accommodating children with disabilities in regular schools. The practices found in this respect were cooperation elicited from the peers and the parents.

**‘Buddy’ System**
An important goal of an inclusive educational system is to prepare the non-disabled children to understand and assist their peers with disabilities. Some of the schools had introduced the ‘buddy system’ to augment this process of inclusion for children with disabilities. This system involves non-disabled children to help their friends with disabilities in classroom and other school activities. Though the ‘buddy system’ ensured that children with disabilities are rendered a helping hand by some students, the behavior is not guaranteed by all classmates. Apart from few friends, all children are not sensitive to the needs of their peers with disabilities (refer theme on challenges). The ‘buddies’ were usually assigned to the children with disabilities by the classroom teacher for few days or weeks.

The system was useful for Simran to quite an extent. Simran has a visual impairment and presents a range of educational needs. The primary need for Simran is to be completely familiar with the physical layout of the classroom. The classroom teacher along with the resource teacher has ensured that Simran is well versed with the classroom arrangement and take care that it is not disturbed through the academic year. The classmates were sensitized to her needs and the teacher encourages everyone to help Simran. The head teacher had instructed not to force responsibility of Simran on other children. The teacher informed that they never had problems with addressing her mobility needs especially to the computer laboratory or the playground. Some students in the class voluntary take that responsibility for her and carry it out successfully.

_Her classmates are extremely sensitive and caring. Some of them give directions to her as guides. One day her friend Jagriti told me that she wants Simran to move around on her own and that is why she helps her understand the school architecture as well (Simran’s class teacher)._
Similarly Nikhil and Rakhi expressed that this system is quite helpful to them as they borrow notes from them, help in accompanying them to different classes and interact with them. The ‘buddy system’ works on rotation and reportedly the non-disabled children carry out the responsibility well.

**Parental Involvement** The schools were involving willing parents `as teachers which was benefiting the child. Furthermore, most parents had already been teaching their children for years. It is the parents who inculcate the behaviours and manners in children even before they enter the school. the resource teachers were found to provide framework and strategies to help them better teach their child. There are two settings where parental involvement is crucial, at home and at school. At schools the parents were given more of secondary roles like providing physical assistance (if needed), completing class notes and facilitating the process of inclusion. At home, there role was magnified as teachers, helping the child with the homework, teaching desired behaviours and maintenance and reinforcing what is taught in school.

In case of Tanmay, the mother is also a proactive stakeholder in his education. She visits the school every day to complete class notes, meet regular and resource teacher on activities to be done at home. She also meets the visiting school counselor periodically to deal with the social and emotional problems of the child.

For Nikhil and Rakhi, the parents are in constant touch with the teachers in the school who inform them about the child’s progress. Nikhil’s mother has taken this responsibility entirely. She visits his school once a week to complete his class notes, meets the concerned teachers and discusses the home teaching approach with the resource teacher. She always wanted to send the child to the regular school so that Nikhil gets a chance to interact with his non-disabled peers. She believed that special school setting could have been very depressing for
the child as well as for the family. She believed that Nikhil can manage well in a regular school with some support.

Thus, parental involvement is a vital component of the process of inclusive education as they were found shouldering responsibilities of their wards in the school ranging from meeting their physical needs to helping them with the classwork and homework.

5.3.3.3 Role of Administration

The minimum requirements which is required for the school to implement the inclusion policy in the current context which emerged from the study was setting up of a resource room equipped with adequate teaching aids and managed by qualified special educators, ensuring accessibility to classrooms, other areas like library, playground and activity areas and upholding an inclusive philosophy.

The Principals as administrative heads were found to play an important role in the entire process. The Principal of the school 3 ensured that children with disabilities are made to feel a part of the school. She organized regular meetings with the resource teachers, regular teachers and parents. She implemented an inclusive policy in school and made it clear to every child seeking admission and his/her parents at the beginning.

Similarly, the Principal of school 6 informed that apart from the academic inputs and focus on performance there were some other goals which the teachers were encouraged to achieve. The school promoted ‘activity based learning’ and the teachers are expected to create a positive, supportive and nurturing environment, encourage involvement of each child, help them develop problem solving skills, and making themselves available for students if they have any problems. This creates an overall learning environment and the Principal ensured compliance through classroom inspection, talking to the students and parents. According to
the principal, the children with disabilities enrolled in the school were adjusting well and had gained acceptance among their classmates and teachers. However, she lamented that if they get support from all the teachers then the experience of inclusion could be more successful.

Some teachers are reluctant to take the responsibility of a blind child. They do not give their 100 percent in the teaching. I try to sensitise them, even at times warn them but I have not been able to see much improvement (Principal, School 6 giving example of Simran).

The other staff of the school were not directly involved with the children on an everyday basis. However, the mothers of Nikhil and Rakhi mentioned that the peons or the guard were sensitive to them and helped them to get in the vehicle.

**Conclusion**

While presenting the information on culture, policies and practices it seems that the practice component was more dynamic. The practices were more specific than universal. If we look at the history of inclusion in schools it is a recent phenomenon and the eligibility criteria entail the nature and severity of disability, family support and ‘educability’ of the child. All the principals clarified that they discourage very severe cases as they feel unequipped to handle them. “We believe in enrolling those whom we can serve (Principal, School 1). Thus practices were tailored to suit individual needs of the child, as we observed in each of the cases. The figure 5.3.1 depicts the ‘not so fixed’ aspect of the process of inclusive education.
In conclusion, it may be valuable to look at certain common and some individualistic practices. For children with disabilities all schools emphasized on seating practices. The common belief that the seat ‘right under the nose’ of the teacher was the best arrangement prevailed in all schools. For some children, undoubtedly this was the best possibility to maximize their abilities like Tanmay, Soham and Simran. Another common practice was the remedial sessions by the resource teachers in various schools. Sending the children with disabilities to the resource centres for any help that they may require or enhance learning was followed by all schools. The prevalence of ‘buddy system’ in some of the schools could also be categorized as common. The ‘buddies’ help the children with disabilities in areas where they may require help for instance helping them finish class work, helping in physical mobility and addressing small concerns like repeating the instructions or demonstrating instructions.

There are some disability specific needs which are catered to in some way by the schools. For example if we analyse the two cases of Nikhil and Rakhi the issues related children with spina bifida
School programmes should be flexible to accommodate the special needs of children. The most important goal of treatment of children with spina bifida is to provide them with the maximum level of mobility and independence possible through optimized therapeutic concepts. This complex disease therefore requires a transdisciplinary effort. Early intervention with children who experience learning problems can help considerably to prepare them for school. Successful inclusion of a child with spina bifida into school sometimes requires changes in school equipment or the curriculum. In adapting the school setting for the child with spina bifida, architectural factors should be considered. This can occur through structural changes (for example, adding elevators or ramps) or through schedule or location changes (for example, offering a course on the ground floor). Children with myelomeningocele need to learn mobility skills, and often require the aid of crutches, braces, or wheelchairs. It is important that all members of the school team and the parents understand the child's physical capabilities and limitations. Physical disabilities like spina bifida can have profound effects on a child's emotional and social development. To promote personal growth, families and teachers should encourage children, within the limits of safety and health, to be independent and to participate in activities with their nondisabled classmates.

The children who exhibit specific needs are mostly catered to by the resource teachers in the schools. In most cases I observed that it was the resource teachers extending the additional help required for the students. Though they attempted to collaborate with the regular teachers by sharing the strategies which they adopt with the children, they did not get the desired response from them. The practice component of the process thus, depended on the resource teacher to the large extent. The children were pulled out of the regular classroom during the free time or hobby classes to attend the remedial sessions with the resource teacher.
Sometimes, the resource teacher also attended the classroom sessions with the children to provide special attention. The role of the resource teacher was flexible and multidimensional. It largely was dependent on the student characteristics, needs and family support available to the student.