INTRODUCTION

In the world today, including some of the most modern and advance civilizations known to man, people with disabilities continue to be unserved or underserved. There are more than 600 million people with disabilities in the world today (UN Report, 2003). More than three quarters of these people live in developing and poor countries, where poverty is the general rule: In developing countries today it is estimated that only one percent of mothers get help beyond that provided by family and friends in rearing their infants; and few developing countries have achieved preschool coverage of 25 to 30 percent (UN Report, 2003). Given this circumstance, it is understandable that people with disabilities are underserved, do not get enough consideration, and therefore, this group of people could not reach their fullness. Among this group of people, however, it is the young children that suffer most since they are at the critical period of time when their situations could be enhanced greatly that have big impacts on their future life, and it is the young children who need the most concern as they are at the plasticity period whose development could be intervened and reorganized so as to help them less dependent and produce the best result. These specialized services that are provided to infants and toddlers at-risk or those who are showing signs of developmental delay, and services that emphasize the continued development of basic skills through planned interactions that will minimize the effects of the baby’s condition, is Early Intervention (EI) (Coleman, 1993). It is obviously important to make
sure that EI is implemented widely around the world, including developed and developing countries, to fully help each and every child with special needs.

Education is the innermost core of human life and development. Any nation is graded according to the literacy of their people. The investment of human capital is the underlying principle for the success of any progressive nation. The article 45 of the Indian constitution provides that “the state shall endeavor to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution, for free compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years.” Education as a human right has been recognized and affirmed in various national and international conferences including Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26), Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 28), World Conference on Education for All (1990), the Salamanca Conference (1994) and World Education Forum (2000) where UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank, etc. and agencies and representatives from all over the world gathered to review and analyze their efforts towards the goal of “Education for All”. Consequently, Inclusive education is regarded as the only means to achieve the goal of “Education for All”. All children are unique and their needs are also different. Education for all children includes children with special needs too. The children with special needs require special educational services. The special education is not a new concept; but it had dawn to the world centuries ago.

Aristotle (350 B.C) wrote, “Men that are deaf are also speechless, ie. They can make vocal sounds, but they cannot speak.” The
imperfection of the deaf and the later pronunciation led destruction. According to Kennedy, (1971) “The handicapped child may be victim of our neglect.” Gallagher (1979) recognized historically four stages in the development of attitude towards handicapped children. First stage is in the pre-Christian era, the handicapped were neglected and mistreated. God viewed disability as punishments for post sins and nobody wanted to interfere in the justice meted are to disabled persons. Second during the spread of Christianity, they were protected and pitied. In the third stage in the 18th and 19th century institutions were established to provide separate education for the handicapped. Fourth, in the late part of 20th century there have been movements towards accepting the handicapped children and integrating them in to the society to the fullest extent possible.

In the 17th century won the beginning of the development of special instructional techniques for the blind, and deaf and attempts were made to describe mental retardation and mental illness from psychological and educational point of view. But the greatest impetus for respect and concern for the right of all human being, including the handicapped, came in 18th century as a result of French revolution.

The education for all handicapped children act (1975) is popularly known as U.S. public law 94-142. It is the landmark in the education of the disabled children, which generates that all disabled individuals up to the age of 21 in the U.S. receive a free and appropriate education.
Education of children with special needs in India is more than a century old. In the beginning, education of the disabled was started in special schools. The missionaries established the first school for the deaf in Mumbai in 1884. The Calcutta deaf and dumb school followed this in 1893. The third institution for the deaf came into existence in 1896 in the palayam kottai in South India. In April 1967, the ministry of education of the India government reported that there were then about 70 schools for hearing impaired children. At present the total number of special schools for the hearing impaired is 478. (NIHH Directory).

The articulation of global concern on ‘Education for All’ echoes India’s preoccupation with Universalizing Elementary Education by addressing the issue of access, equity and quality. Research findings across the globe indicate that schools and teachers are struggling to respond to wide array of students. At the school level, inclusive education seeks to address the learning needs of all with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion. The regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discrimination, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. (UNESCO, 1994). This has further restated in World Education Forum that school should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic and other conditions, (Dakar, 2000). The Indian National Policy on Education (1986, revised in 1992) and National Curriculum Framework for school education (2000) emphasized the need for integration of all children with special
needs in the regular schools. Keeping in view the observation of NPE (1986) and ‘Persons with Disabilities, Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation Act (1995) and other international developments necessitate integration of all children in regular schools and common classrooms. Inclusive education as an ideology has been defined as the acceptance of all pupils in the regular education system and taught within a common framework. This necessitates building competences of the regular teachers to deal with diverse population of students and to learn pedagogical strategies that facilitate learning of all students in their classroom. Initial teacher education courses, therefore must respond for “preparing all teachers to teach all pupils”.

In India, welfare of the disabled children was a neglected field. But the educational provision for the disabled children became a priority as a result of the national policy of education 1986. Handicapped must be educated to become the useful members of the society; they should be trained so as to earn their livelihood with out much dependence.

Each region of the world has its own way of conceptualizing and defining inclusive education. Therefore different interpretation of inclusive education are question about what constitute content of inclusive education that perspective teacher should learn to practice it. The National Policy on Education (1986), Teacher Education Curriculum Frameworks (1988,1998) suggested that all pre-service teacher education (general) should include a component of education of special needs children besides giving a sound knowledge base of constitutional provisions-justice, liberty and equality, equalization of
educational opportunities and preparing teachers for plurality. As has already been mentioned in earlier section, the concept of inclusive education has been operationalised by addressing learning needs of all children- disadvantaged children, minorities, working children, disabled, girls, rural poor, urban deprived etc. Further analysis have been done on the basis of the definition given by Salmanaca, (1994); Dakar, (2000); MHRD(2003)and Booth et. al (2003), i.e. participation of all regardless of ethnicity, gender, social background, disability or attainment. The content analysis has been done to determine the current status of teacher education from inclusive education perspectives and how the concept and themes relating to inclusive education have been integrated in teacher education curriculum/ syllabi.

The development has been taking place in the education of the hearing impaired since post independence. Hearing impaired in special schools become acquainted only with fellow Hearing impaired children and their exposure to the non-disabled world was limited. Education thought of bringing the hearing impaired in to General education system.

Providing quality ‘Education for All’ children in inclusive setting has identified as the most challenging, yet the most important issue in education across the world. In the economically poorer countries, the issue is most urgently focused on providing schools and teachers for the 113 million or so children who has no access to basic education (Aniscow, 2003). The situation is much more glaring in India, where country is striving hard to Universalize Elementary
Education, specially for providing education to disadvantaged group, marginalized section of the society, disabled children, girls, rural poor etc. As per the Indian constitution, the country is committed to providing free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14.

The adoption of the National Policy on Education by the Parliament in 1986 is a major landmark in the history of education in independent India. The NPE (1986) and its Programme of Action (1992) also lay emphasis on the removal of disparities, equalization of educational opportunity, while the emphasis in others is on certain aspects of the content and process that have a bearing on education of children with special needs. The National Policy embodies the concept of a National system of Education, which implies:

- All students to have access to education of a comparable quality;
- Envisage a common educational structure;
- To adopt National Curriculum Framework which contains a common core along with other components that are flexible;
- To lay emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalize educational opportunity by attending to the specific needs of those who have denied equality so far;
- Education to be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women;
- Focus on the education of SC/ST, other educationally backward sections and areas and minorities;

- Efforts to integrate the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners through different measures.

The National Policy on Education (1986) recognizes education of disabled as a human resource development activity and not merely a welfare activity. It recommends that, every attempt should be made to develop integrated programmes enabling the handicapped to study in general education system. The fact is that large number of children with mild disabilities enters the school system but many dropouts due to lack of sensitivity to their educational need in the system. The National Commission on Teachers- I (1983-85) also pointed out large discrepancy between in needs and provisions of care of the disabled. Thrust areas and the specific measures suggested by National Education Policy are: access to education for all, quality education to all, teacher training and vocational training of children. Programme of Action (1992) further reiterated that for achieving equalization of educational opportunities, the disabled should have access to quality education comparable to other children and reorienting pre service and in service teacher education programs to meet special needs in the class room. The Persons With Disabilities (PWD) Act (1995) directs the government and local authorities to assure that every child with a disability has access to free education in an appropriate environment till the age of eighteen years and promote the interaction of student with disabilities in the normal school.
In integrated education programme hearing impaired children are educated along with non-disabled peer groups in general schools in the assistance of special teachers. The integrated Education for the Disabled Children (IEDC) scheme, started in 1974, to cater children with disabilities under the regular system of education. However IEDC scheme has extended to 41,875 schools benefiting more than 1,33,000 disabled children in 27 states and 4 UTs (MHRD, 2003). Besides, there are many special schools operating as parallel system. Towards this end, District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) also supported community mobilization and early detection, in service teacher training and provision of resource support, provision of educational aids and appliances, removal of architectural barriers etc. All these activities are now supported by the programme Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan that visualizes providing quality elementary education to all children by 2010. The last decade has witnessed policy interventions and also legislations for promoting education of children with special needs. ‘Current policies do not satisfy teachers in either mainstream nor separate schools, nor academics who urge more extensive forms of inclusive education (Tomlinson, 1997). This statement has larger implications for India in terms of its conceptualization and implementation. The education of the hearing impaired children in the integrated education programme for the disabled children (IEDC) was started in Kerala in the year1998-99. But the actual scheme was implemented in the year 1996 after the implementation of the disability act 1995 published on the 1st January 1996. This programme provides educational opportunities for the disabled children in the common schools, to facilitate their retention in the school system.
The National Curriculum Framework for School Education brought out by National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT, 2000) has made significant recommendation for inclusive schools as a measure towards achieving quality education for all learners. “Segregation or isolation is good neither for learners with impairments. Societal requirement is that learners with special needs should be educated along with other learners in inclusive schools, which are cost effective and sound pedagogical practices”. Therefore, it promotes participation of all learners without any discrimination in regular schools.

It addresses reducing discrimination on the basis of gender, class, disability etc. Inclusive education means all learners, young people with or without disabilities being able to learn together in ordinary pre school provisions, schools and community, educational setting with appropriate network of support services. (MHRD, 2003). Therefore, it calls for participation of all children with diversity and supporting diverse needs. The concept of inclusion placed the emphasis on changing the system rather that the child. The argument is that our educational system, structure and practices need to shift and become more flexible, more inclusive and more collaborative in order to accommodate children with learning differences.

An inclusive school provides support to all learners with in the locality i.e. ‘school for all’ (SFA). This necessitates change and adoption in curriculum, teaching learning process and building a democratic ethos in the school. Inclusion as the process of addressing the barriers to the presence, participation and achievement of pupils in

Therefore every school has to accept inclusion as a basic philosophy or principle and provide space for each child—socially disadvantaged groups (Scheduled caste, scheduled tribes, minorities, disabled, rural poor, urban deprived, girls, disabled etc). Though Inclusive Education concept is in evolving stage in India, but for the present deliberation, the issue is addressed to all children rather than only to disabled category. Further inclusive education also recognizes that education is broader than schooling and school should support the education within communities rather be seen as its only source. The philosophy of inclusion hinges on helping students and teachers become better member of the community by creating new vision for communities and for schools.

Owing to lack of knowledge, educational access and technology, disabled children were initially treated as unwanted and segregated from other children. Later their education was carried out in special schools. In recent times there has been a shift towards having children with disabilities attend the same schools as non-disabled children. The educationists now feel that each child should be allowed to learn in his own way. The concept of inclusive education has been spelt out in the Salamanca statement and the framework for action on special needs
education 1994. It states that all governments have been urged to "adopt as a matter of law or policy, the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise". The basic premise is that the school should meet the educational needs of all children irrespective of their disabilities or limitations.

Though all the policies and schemes overtly support education for all and education of disadvantaged, minorities, working children, disabled, girls, rural poor etc., yet there is a greater need for addressing the concept of inclusive education in a comprehensive manner in teacher education system.

The effectiveness of the hearing impaired education depends upon the relationship between the three principal participants. Family, school and society. Each participant benefits from the continuous growth of the other. Hearing-impaired children have the same needs as normal children. They need love, affection, recognition freedom and freedom from the family and the society.

The statistics of the National sample survey (1991) of India revealed that the population of hearing impaired is 3.242 million in the age group of 0-14 and speech impaired is 1.996 millions.

**NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Many children experience learning difficulties and thus have special educational needs at some time during their schooling. Schools have to find ways of successfully educating all children, including
those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. There is an emerging consensus that children and youth with special educational needs should be included in the educational arrangements made for the majority of children. This has led to the concept of the inclusive school. The challenge confronting the inclusive school is that of developing a child-centered pedagogy capable of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. The merit of such schools is not only that they are capable of providing quality education to all children; their establishment is a crucial step in helping to change discriminatory attitudes, in creating welcoming communities and in developing an inclusive society.

Hearing is the main sensory pathway through which speech and verbal communication develop. If a child hears imperfectly, he is likely to speak incorrectly. Again hearing also influences learning and other aspects of maturation.

Hearing Impairment is a broad term that refers to hearing losses of varying degrees from hard-of-hearing to total deafness. Students with a hearing impairment may be hard to recognize in the classroom. They may use hearing aids, lip-read, sign language or a combination of these three. The two major challenges facing students with hearing impairments are communication and discrimination. Students with hearing impairments vary widely in their skill level and methodology of communication. The most frequently used method at Saginaw Valley State University is a combination of lip-reading and residual hearing, which is often amplified by hearing aids. Hearing impaired
refers to any person with any type of degree of hearing loss. Deaf refers to individuals with nonfunctional hearing. Hard of hearing is used to define a hearing impaired person whose sense of hearing, although defective, is functional and whose language skills will be developed through an auditory base.

According to Stevenson,(1961) “A deaf person- through many times, possessed of sound perception - is one who does not react understandingly to spoken language. A hard of hearing person is one who reacts to spoken language understandingly, provided the source is brought within his learning range, either through a loud voice, through amplification of sound, or through other mechanical device. A deaf person may have 20% of sound perception but nevertheless he does not understandingly hear spoken language. A hard of hearing person may have only 5% of hearing. Yet nevertheless he hears understandingly.”

The ultimate goal of the Inclusive Education for Hearing-Impaired Children is “to provide access to inclusive education to hearing-impaired children and the opportunity to become accepted and productive members of society.” Clearly, children with hearing loss are becoming more accepted as a result of their inclusion in local schools. Teachers, parents, and officials reported that they have more positive attitudes towards children with hearing loss. Many parents and communes began to see the value of sending these children to school. We encountered a number of children who were placed in school only after their parents were inspired by the positive spirit of
inclusive education. Overall there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the program, and a great desire to see its benefits continue and be built upon.

In school, hearing loss may interfere with learning and if undetected, can cause poor scholarship performance or academic failure. Further, children with hearing loss may exhibit negative behavior related to the loss, such as not paying attention, interrupting others and inappropriately responding to oral directions or not responding at all.

Silva et.al,(1982) reported that mothers rated those children with hearing loss as being significantly more restless, destructive, disobedient, less well-liked by other children and less goal-oriented.

Hearing impairments are believed by many to be the most devastating of the sensory handicaps. Hearing impairments are communication handicaps which keep us from people (Darrow, 1989). Communication is the basis of our social and cognitive being, and without it we are cut off from the world.

According to the extracts from the Ministry of welfare notification No. 4 – 2/83 HW, III dated 6.8.86 of the Government of India the hearing impaired categories are as detailed below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Type of impairment</th>
<th>dB level and /not</th>
<th>Speech discrimination</th>
<th>Percentage of impairment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Mild hearing impairment</td>
<td>24 to 40dB in better ear</td>
<td>80 to 100% in better ear</td>
<td>Less than 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>Moderate hearing impairment</td>
<td>41 to 55 dB in better</td>
<td>50 to 80% in better</td>
<td>40 to 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>Severe hearing impairment</td>
<td>56 to 70 dB hearing impairments in better ear</td>
<td>40 to 50% in better ear</td>
<td>50 to 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>a) Total deafness</td>
<td>No hearing</td>
<td>No discrimination</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) Near total</td>
<td>91 dB and above in better ear</td>
<td>No discrimination</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c) Profound hearing impairment</td>
<td>71 to 90 dB</td>
<td>Less than 40% in better ear</td>
<td>75 to 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The hearing impaired children are encouraged to get equal educational experiences in the normal schools and expected to follow the same curriculum for the normal children. To compensate hearing loss, hearing impaired children are also included in co-curricular activities, which aim at providing all compensatory skills to make the children to be independent. This helps to bridge the gap between the cognitive development of the hearing impaired children and their educational opportunity.
In India, there are some special schools for hearing impaired children. It is true that these special schools alone will not provide educational service to vast majority of hearing impaired school going children population. So, we have to go for integrated educational concept. Inclusive education is still developing and presently it is not easy to identify ‘good practices’. In this study, good practices were analysed by using three dimensions: creating inclusive culture; producing inclusive polices; and evolving inclusive practices (Booth et al., 2001). Inclusive culture was analysed by studying the knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers, parents and children in accepting children with disabilities. Enrolment policies of the government were examined to identify inclusive policies. Inclusive practices included teacher training programmes showing awareness, and providing guidance in modification of materials, methodology, content and evaluation for the benefit of all children.

It’s a cruel scandal that over 90 million physically challenged children worldwide, of whom 36 million are in India, are being systemically excluded from mainstream education. The aim of the North South Dialogue II was to initiate focused discussion on this subject and to suggest ways and means by which children with disabilities can be integrated into mainstream education in India and worldwide. Many countries have made policy changes to that effect, but few — including India — have put these policies into practice.

The genesis of special needs education in India can be traced back to pre-independent India. There are examples in Indian history that show that people with disabilities had educational opportunities,
and that disability did not come in the way of learning. However, during the colonial period, India increasingly looked at educational models existing outside the country. Parents of children with disabilities, mainly from urban areas and with exposure to approaches prevalent in western countries, started schools for their children. Since the government had no policy on the education of children with disabilities, it extended grants to these private schools. This approach of setting up separate schools, mostly residential, spread across the country, although it was concentrated in urban areas. However, for a country the size of India, their numbers were small. For over a century, these special schools offered the only education available to children with disabilities because of the widespread belief that children with special needs could not be educated alongside others. This allowed a small number of children to have access to education but did not help these children to enter the mainstream community after completing their education.

Kothari commission (1964-66) stated that “the education of the handicapped children has to be organized not merely on humanitarian grounds but also on the grounds of utility. Proper education generally enables a handicapped child to overcome his/her handicap and makes him/her into useful citizen. Social justice also demands it. It has to be remembered that the constitutional directives in compulsory education, include handicapped children as well.”

Two decades later, the National Policy on Education (NPE) (1986) stressed the ‘removal of disparities’ in education, while attending to the specific needs of those who had been denied equality
so far (MHRD, 1986). It stated ‘the objective should be to integrate the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth, and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence.’ In 1987, to fulfil the provisions for disabled children in the NPE, the government launched the Project for Integrated Education Development (PIED). It states ‘wherever feasible, the education of children with motor handicaps and other mild handicaps will be in common with that of others.’ According to the NPE, ‘the indicators of integration are that handicapped people enjoy the same rights as the rest; have opportunities for growth and development in environmental conditions available to the rest; have access to the quality of life like any other citizen; and are treated as equal partners in the community.’

In 1974, for the first time, the necessity of integrated education was explicitly emphasized under the scheme for Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC). In pursuit of the goal of providing basic education for all, the National Policy on Education (1986) and its follow-up actions have been major landmarks. The World Declaration on Education for All adopted in 1990 gave further boost to the various processes already set in motion in the country. The Rehabilitation Council of India Act 1992 initiated a training programme for the development of professionals to respond to the needs of students with disabilities. The enactment of the People with Disability Act in 1996 provided legislative support. This act makes it mandatory to provide free education to children with disabilities in an appropriate environment until the age of 18 years. In 1999, the government passed
the National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act for the economic rehabilitation of people with disabilities. These acts have been instrumental in bringing about a perceptive change/ improvement in the attitude of government, NGOs and people with disabilities. In recent years, two major initiatives have been launched by the government for achieving the goals of universalization of elementary education (UEE): the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) in 1994 and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in 2002.

The key objective of SSA is Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE). Three important aspects of UEE are access, enrolment and retention of all children in 6-14 years of age. This goal of UEE, has further been facilitated by the Constitutional (86th Amendment) Act, making 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 (CWSN), as 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 CWSN. Hence, education of CWSN is an important component of SSA.

The NPE (1986), recognized the need of giving special attention to the education of handicapped. The objectives should be to integrate the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners, to propose them for normal growth and enable them to face life with courage and confidence (Para 4.9). The policy recommends certain measures in this regard.
1. Whenever feasible, the education of children with locomotar handicaps and the mild handicaps will become on with that of others.

2. Special schools with hostel facilities will be provided as far as possible at district headquarters for severely handicapped children.

3. Adequate arrangements will be made for vocational training to the disabled.

4. Teachers training programme should be reoriented in particular for teachers of primary classes, to deal with special difficulties of handicapped children.

5. Voluntary efforts for the education of the disabled will be encouraged in every possible way.

Ramamurthi commission (1990), however emphatically suggested that general education system should take care of the education of all children, it also suggested the redefinition of the role of special schools to break their isolation. The commission recommended that,

1. Early identification of children with handicaps and formulation of stimulation programme for them and the community in their catchment areas.

2. Service as reserve agencies for implementing integrated educational programmes in general schools so that they feel as a part and parcel of the educational system.
3. Bringing about mutual reinforcement of the pedagogies of special and general education.

Curriculum flexibility is of special significance for these children. Special needs for these children will be met if child-centred education is practiced. Child-to-child help in education of the children with disabilities is an effective resource in view of large classes and multi-grade teaching.

Research is now increasingly addressed to school and classroom practice. To achieve the goal of developing effective schools for children including those with special educational needs the system requires pragmatic research support. “No child is uneducable” is the hallmark of special education, and this has contributed to a totally new dimension to the education of the disabled children. The “integration” and “main streaming” became catchwords in special education vocabulary in the ‘70s which attribute programmes today in developing countries like India that ‘assimilate’ disabled children in general schools. Normalisation implies the utilisation of services and facilities made available to all children normal or otherwise but which are culturally appropriate. There are ever so many programmes in Kerala to integrate the education of the disabled and normal children.

There are so many challenges encountered by the functionaries of the integrated education for the hearing impaired and normal children. The demonstration in the class, issue of special material, using of aids, teaching approaches, skills, evaluations, etc. to hearing
impaired is entirely different to that of normal children. So, teachers, heads of schools, and the children themselves encountered many challenges. The hearing impairment causes more disabilities than the visual impairment. Due to hearing impairment one cannot learn language in natural setting. Inspite of our auditory ability sometimes may be due to the noise or any other distraction we are unable to enjoy or appreciate certain communications. Our sense of hearing enables us to be close contact with our physical environment.

In Kerala, studies on hearing impaired children are considerably less. The investigator being a teacher, from his own experience has felt that it is the need of the hour to investigate thoroughly the major issues and challenges encountered by the teachers, Heads of Schools, hearing impaired children and normal children of primary schools in the teaching-learning situations in integrated education programmes. So, the investigator hopes that this study has a special significance in our society.

However, the investigator confined this study on the Attitude of Teachers, Heads of Schools, Hearing impaired children and Normal children towards Integrated Education Programme and Challenges encountered by the above groups regarding the implementation of the Programme. The outcome of this attempt would help to evolve the Strategies for the effective functioning and further expansion of the Integrated education programme.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Integrated education for the hearing impaired is a crucial problem facing by Educationists, authorities and teachers all over the world. Hence, solution of this problem is an urgent need for the development of the society and for the development of the hearing impaired children. Special schools are dead-ends for special needs children. They promote isolation, alienation and social exclusion. It is this dominant attitude of exclusion which needs to be changed to build harmonious and compassionate societies.

The present study is an attempt to find out the challenges faced by the personnel and children in teaching learning situation of the primary schools of Kerala where integrated education programme of the hearing impaired is implemented. The study is entitled as “ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS, HEADS OF SCHOOLS, HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN AND NORMAL CHILDREN TOWARDS INTEGRATED EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY THE GROUPS REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME.”

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS:

Attitude

In the present study, the term attitude is “a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive
or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it related” (Allport, 1935).

Teachers

In the present study, the term teachers means the regular teachers and resource teachers working in integrated education programme of the primary schools of Kerala.

Heads of Schools

In the present study, Heads of schools means the school administrators, ie, the heads of schools in the primary schools of Kerala where the integrated education programme is implemented.

Hearing impaired children

The loss of hearing temporarily or permanent, ranging from mild to profound and some times total. (Thesni, 1996) Children belonging to this category in the integrated education programmes are called hearing impaired children. Hearing is measured in decibels. Decibels are the measurement of sound. This is recorded in audiograms.

Normal children

In the present study, Normal children mean the children with out disabilities in the integrated education programme.

Integrated education programme

This is an educational programme in which the hearing impaired children are educated along with the non-disabled children
in general schools. In those schools, there is a resource room and also a resource teacher who assists the hearing impaired children in their studies. The hearing impaired children receive the instructions from regular classroom teachers as well as from the resource teachers. The resource teacher concentrates on the special skills needed for hearing-impaired children such as lip reading, sign language, total communication skills etc. The regular teacher assume the responsibility of the general programme of the child and he is the content specialist who is getting assistance of the resource teacher in handling hearing impaired children in the area of the skills special to hearing impairment.

**Challenges**

Challenges mean a new or difficult task that tests some body’s ability and skills in a particular profession.

**Encounter**

Encounter means to experience some thing, especially something unpleasant or difficult, while you are trying to do something else.

**Implementation**

To make something that has been officially decided to start or to be used.

**VARIABLES OF THE STUDY**

The study has been designed with the following major variables and criterion variables;
Major variables:

i. Attitude of Teachers, Heads of schools, Hearing impaired children and Normal children towards Integrated education programme.

ii. Challenges encountered by different groups regarding the implementation of the programme and,

iii. Obstacles faced by Teachers and Heads of schools in the implementation of Integrated education programme.

Criterion variables:

i. Locality of schools

ii. Management category of schools (i.e. Govt. or Private)

iii. Sex of teachers (Regular teachers and Resource teachers)

iv. Sex of primary school pupils and,

v. Sex of Heads of schools

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Major Objectives set for the study are the following:

1. To estimate the levels of Attitude towards Integrated education programme of the following samples:

   a. Regular teachers
   b. Resource teachers
c. Heads of schools
d. Normal children and,
e. Hearing impaired children

2. To compare the mean scores of Attitude of the following subgroups towards Integrated education programme
   a. Resource teachers and Regular teachers
   b. Normal children and Hearing impaired children

3. To compare the mean scores of Attitude of Hearing impaired children and Normal children towards Integrated education programmes in the primary schools of Kerala for the sub samples based on sex of children, locality and management category of the schools.

4. To compare the mean scores of Attitude of Regular teachers and Resource teachers towards Integrated education programmes in the primary schools of Kerala for the sub samples based on sex of teachers, locality and management category of the schools.

5. To compare the mean scores of Attitude of Heads of schools towards Integrated education programmes in the primary schools of Kerala for the sub samples based on sex of Heads of schools, locality and management category of the schools.

6. To find out the interaction effect of the criterion variables, locality, management of schools and sex of Heads of schools separately on Attitude of Heads of schools towards Integrated education programme for the Hearing impaired children.
7. To find out the interaction effect of the criterion variables, locality, management of schools and sex of Regular teachers and Resource teachers on Attitude of teachers towards Integrated education programme for the Hearing impaired children.

8. To find out the interaction effect of the criterion variables, locality, management of schools and sex of Hearing impaired children and Normal children on Attitude of the children towards Integrated education programme for the Hearing impaired children.

9. To analyse the challenges encountered in the implementation of the Integrated education programme in general and by the following samples
   a. Regular teachers
   b. Resource teachers
   c. Heads of schools
   d. Normal children and,
   e. Hearing impaired children

10. To suggest remedial measures for ensuring the success of the Integrated education programme.

**HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

Hypotheses of the study are the following:

1. There will be different levels of Attitude (i.e. favourable, moderately favourable, and unfavourable) towards the Integrated education programme for the following samples.
a. Regular teachers  
b. Resource teachers  
c. Heads of schools  
d. Normal children and,  
e. Hearing impaired children  

2. There will be significant difference in the mean scores of the Attitude of Regular teachers and Resource teachers towards the Integrated education programme in the primary schools of Kerala.

3. There will be significant difference in the mean scores of the Attitude of Normal children and Hearing impaired children towards the Integrated education programme in the primary schools of Kerala.

4. There will be significant difference between the mean scores of the Attitude of Hearing-impaired children and Normal children towards Integrated education programmes in the primary schools of Kerala for the sub samples based on sex of children, locality and management category of the schools.

5. There will be significant difference between the mean scores of the Attitude of Regular teachers and Resource teachers towards Integrated education programmes in the primary schools of Kerala for the sub samples based on sex of teachers, locality and management category of the schools.

6. There will be significant difference between the mean scores of the Attitude of Heads of schools towards Integrated education
programmes in the primary schools of Kerala for the sub samples based on sex of heads, locality and management category of the schools.

7. The interaction effect of sex of Heads of schools, locality and management category of schools on the Attitude of Heads of schools towards Integrated education programme for Hearing impaired in the primary schools of Kerala will be significant.

8. The interaction effect of sex of Regular teachers and Resource teachers, locality and management category of teachers on the Attitude of Regular teachers and Resource teachers towards Integrated education programme for Hearing impaired will be significant.

9. The interaction effect of sex of Hearing impaired and Normal children, locality and management category of children on the Attitude of Hearing impaired and Normal children towards Integrated education programme will be significant.

10. There will be different types of challenges encountered by Teachers, (Regular teachers and Resource teachers) Heads of schools, Hearing impaired children and Normal children in the teaching learning situations in the Integrated education programme.

11. For ensuring the success of integrated education programme, remedial measures will be suggested.
METHODOLOGY

Sample

Regular teachers

To gather the attitude of regular teachers towards the integrated education programme, 125 regular teachers in the primary schools of Kerala were selected as a sample.

Resource teachers

80 Resource teachers in the primary schools of Kerala is the sample to gather attitude of the resource teachers towards integrated education programme.

Heads of Schools

To gather and analyse the attitude of Heads of Schools towards the integrated education programme, 61 Heads of schools in the primary schools of Kerala were selected as a sample.

Hearing-impaired children

80 hearing impaired children in the primary schools of Kerala were selected as a sample to gather their attitude towards integrated education programme.

Normal children

To gather the attitude of Normal children towards the integrated education programme, 200 Normal children in the primary schools of Kerala were selected as a sample.
**Tools employed**

In this study, the investigator used the survey method as a main technique to investigate the challenges encountered by the teachers, administrators, hearing impaired children and normal children in the teaching learning situations in the integrated education programmes. The following tools were developed for the present study.

1. **Attitude scale on Integrated Education programme for Heads of Schools.**
2. **Attitude scale on Integrated Education programme for Regular teachers and Resource teachers.**
3. **Attitude scale on Integrated Education programme for hearing impaired children and normal children**
4. **Interview schedule on the challenges encountered by Heads of Schools.**
5. **Interview schedule on the challenges encountered by Regular teachers and Resource teachers**

The Attitude Scales and Interview schedules were prepared by the investigator with the help of his supervising teacher after discussion with educational experts like Deputy Director of Education, District Educational officers, faculty of SCERT, faculty of DIETs, and Administrators and Teachers of various primary schools. Moreover, the investigator made use of information’s from several books (Handbook of integrated education of the children with special needs,(1997), Annual report of DPEP 1999-2000 etc.) For the construction of the tools.
Statistical techniques used

The following statistical techniques are used for the analysis of data.

As a first step of analysis the important statistical constants such as mean, median mode and standard deviation of the select variables are determined.

a. Percentage analysis
b. Test of significance of difference between means
c. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Special schools are dead ends for special needs children. They promote isolation, alienation and social exclusion. Child won’t learn unless they are happy and included. In Kerala, now the thrust of Education Department will be on providing Integrated and inclusive education support a wide range of approaches, options and strategies for education of children with special needs. This programme has the potential to meet the diverse educational need for all children.

Since 1998, IEDC programme (Integrated Education for Disabled Children) has been receiving special emphasis under DPEP aiming at the Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) in 2002 has taken major initiative in this programme. But, programme launched have been able to make only a limited impact in terms of increasing participation of children with disabilities in formal education.
In these circumstances, the present study is relevant because, the teachers, heads of schools, hearing impaired children and normal children were facing many challenges in the teaching learning situations of the integrated education programme in the primary schools of Kerala. This study intended to find out the challenges encountered by Heads of schools, teachers, hearing impaired children and normal children in the integrated education programme of Kerala. This study is also intended to find out the obstacles standing on the way of implementing integrated education programme and to suggest remedial measures for ensuring the success of the programme.

The limitations of the study are the following:

1. The required data were collected from 6 Districts of Kerala. This was in view of economy of time and money. As the primary schools of Kerala in different districts were following same methods in the case of integrated education programme for the hearing impaired children, because the implementing agency is same, the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA). All primary schools of Kerala is following the same strategy in integrated education programme.

2. The size of the sample taken is not so large in the case of resource teachers, heads of schools and hearing impaired children. From statistical point of view, the size of the sample is not too small because in a district the number of hearing impaired children in the primary schools is low. There is only one resource teacher for the hearing impaired in one Block Resource Centre (BRC).
With these limitations, the study is expected to throw light on the issues and challenges in the integrated education programme and pave a way to suggest remedial measures for the successful implementation of the programme in the primary schools of Kerala. The investigator hopes that the study will provide useful information to the classroom teacher, resource teacher, Heads of schools and students of the integrated education programmes. He also hoped that the study will provide guidelines to the heads of schools, resource teachers and regular teachers for implementing the programme.

**ORGANISATION OF THE REPORT**

The report of the study is organized in five chapters.

**Chapter I** Presents the need and significance of the study, statement of the problem, definition of key terms, variables, major objectives and hypotheses, scope and limitations of the study.

**Chapter II** presents overview of the study and review of related literature regarding Integrated education programme for the hearing impaired children.

**Chapter III** covers the methodology adopted for the present study which includes variables of the study, selection of sample, techniques and tools employed for collection of data, procedures adopted for the collection of the data and statistical techniques used.

**Chapter IV** of the report is set apart for analysis and interpretation. This include detailed statistical analysis of the data collected and discussion and interpretation of the results.
Chapter V, the final chapter includes summary of findings, conclusion, challenges, remedial measures and suggestions. The study includes retrospective restatement of the problem, major findings, its educational implications and suggests further research.