CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

Education systems have changed drastically in the last few decades as educating children with disabilities in regular schools has become an important aspect of education system in many countries. This development to keep pupils with disabilities in regular educational settings instead of referring them to special schools is best described with the term ‘inclusion’. According to Rafferty, Boettcher & Griffin (2001), inclusion refers to ‘the process of educating children with disabilities in the regular education classrooms of their neighbourhood schools–the schools they would attend if they did not have a disability–and providing them with the necessary services and support’. Parallel to the development towards including pupils with disabilities into regular schools the terminology to denote those pupils changed. The Warnock Report (Warnock, 1978) suggested moving the focus away from handicaps and disabilities and replacing these with the term ‘Special Educational Needs’. Thus, the focus shifted away from the pupil’s disability to the special needs the pupil has in education.

Significant number of disabled children and youth are largely excluded from educational opportunities for primary and secondary schooling. Exclusion, poverty and disability are linked. Education is widely recognized as a means to develop human capital, to improve economic performance, and to enhance people’s capabilities and choices. Exclusion from education can result in a staggering loss of freedom and productivity in the labor market. The international community (at least at the policy level) has recognized education as a fundamental child right and has committed to a framework for action to address this right, and to redress exclusion as directed by EFA 2000.

Including students with diverse educational needs in mainstream schools is now at the heart of educational policy and planning throughout the world and this emphasis on education for all within inclusive schools has served as
a catalyst for the transformation of schools. Philosophy regarding the education of children with disabilities has changed significantly over the past two decades and several countries have led in the effort to implement policies which foster the integration and, more recently, inclusion of these students into mainstream educational settings. The belief that special schools could provide the best education for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) has long been considered in many Western countries. However, this belief was questioned in the early 80s, resulting in a discussion to integrate Children With Special Needs (CWSN) in regular schools. Causing the implementation of inclusive education, an increase in the number of CWSN was apparent, which led to the growing belief that spending more time on CWSN would ultimately save public money (Warnock Committee, 1978). Special education led to a segregation of students with SEN from society, which implies a violation of students’ rights to be educated with typically developing peers (Fisher, Roach & Frey, 2002). It was no longer believed that special education provided a better education than regular education. The literature reviewed by Gartner and Lipsky & Gartner (1987) underlined that the academic achievement of students with relatively mild SEN in special and regular education did not differ significantly. In line with this, Kavale & Forness (2000) concluded that the effects of special education on academic as well as social development can be questioned. In the early 80s the Warnock report had an important influence on shaping the ideas about special education. Later, in the early 90s, many countries across signed the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), the basic assumption of its Framework of Action being the right of every person with a disability to express his/her wishes with respect to education. Furthermore, the Statement makes it clear that policymakers, school heads and teachers should promote positive attitudes towards CWSN in regular education, since “regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating
discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all”.

1.1 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive Education in context of the goals of Education for All is a complex issue, and no coherent approach is evident in the literature. First, at a basic level of policy, unlike health and labor markets, disability is seen as an array of issues crossing health, education, social welfare, and employment sectors, etc. As a result, policy development in relation to individuals with disabilities faces challenges to avoid fragmented, uneven, and difficult to access services. Second, Inclusive Education may be implemented at different levels, embrace different goals, be based on different motives, reflect different classifications of Special Education Needs (SEN), and provide services in different contexts. Specific goals may focus either on improved educational performance and quality of education, or on autonomy, self determination, proportionality, consumer satisfaction or parental choice. Some of these goals may conflict and produce tensions. Similarly, motives for Inclusive Education may be derived from dissatisfaction with the system, from economic or resource allocation concerns, or from a vision of educational reform. Finally, SEN services may be viewed as a continuum of placement options (multi-track approach), as a distinct education system (two-track approach) or as a continuum of services within one placement- the general education school and classroom (one-track approach). All of the variants produced by these different aims, levels, systems and motives may be called Inclusive Education.

The term ‘inclusive education’ is often used to refer to educating students with or without SEN in regular schools (Rafferty et al., 2001). The definition of Farrell (2000) includes a more student-oriented perspective and states that ‘students with SEN should take a full and active part in school-life, are a valued member of the school community and are seen as an integral member’. Most recently, Article 24 of the UN Convention on the
Rights of Persons with Disability (United Nations, 2006) guarantees the right of persons with disabilities to an inclusive education system at all levels. By signing the Convention, countries commit to providing “effective individualized support measures in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion”. A total number of 153 states signed this convention, including India.

Inclusion in an educational philosophy aimed at "normalizing" special services for which students qualify. Inclusion involves an attempt to provide more of these special services by providing additional aids and support rather than by pulling students out for isolated instruction. Inclusion involves the extension of general education curricula and goals to provide students special services. Finally, inclusion involves shared responsibility, problem solving, and mutual support among all the staff members who provide services to students.

Inclusion is actually a much stronger concept which refers to “the right to belong to the mainstream” (Centre of the Studies on Inclusive Education, 2007); leaving behind the idea that only few learners have “special needs”. The social model of inclusion rather suggests that all students as individual learners present their own peculiar characteristics and have their own specific educational needs. Such a perspective implies a Copernican revolution which brings all students at the very heart of the educational process whilst the school is required to adjust and change in order to enable each of them to participate in the life of the school to the best of their abilities.

There are many definitions for inclusive education because internationally it is described differently in different educational and social contexts. However, in essence, inclusive education refers to the practice and process of involving and meeting the diverse needs of all learners in supportive schools and classrooms. “It therefore, reflects a deep commitment to create
an educational system that values and respects diversity and supports all learners, educators and school communities to maximize participation and development of their full potential” (Swart, 2004). In the process of celebrating and accommodating diversity, the educational system transforms by developing ways of making the curriculum accessible to all learners. Inclusive education therefore, means change such as restructuring and re-culturing educational systems. It also refers to new responsibilities for all school community members with the aim of being able to meet the needs of every learner. “This involves new and continuous learning for everyone. The concept of inclusion in school communities is not static. To meet the needs of an increasingly diverse learners’ population effectively, inclusive education must be approached as an ongoing and evolutionary process” (Swart & Pettipher, 2006). The field of inclusion is often characterized as the field within which resolutions of the dilemma of difference emerge (Dyson & Howes, 2009).

“Inclusive education - according to UNESCO means that the school can provide a good education to all pupils irrespective of their varying abilities. All children will be treated with respect and ensured equal opportunities to learn together. Inclusive education is an on-going process. Teachers must work actively and deliberately to reach its goals”.

Inclusion is a philosophy for bringing children with special needs well within the purview of mainstream education to recognize the diverse needs of the students and ensures quality education to all through appropriate curricula, teaching strategies, support services and partnerships with the community. Inclusion should, then, be regarded as a long-lasting process which requires time, effort, competence and strong conviction by all those involved in students’ education, first and foremost, by teachers. The overall goal of inclusive education is to promote opportunities for all children to participate and be treated equally. Inclusive education is defined as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners
and of reducing exclusion to and within education system (UNESCO, 2003). Inclusive education is concerned within providing appropriate responses to the broad spectrum of learning needs in both formal and non-formal educational settings. It advocates for changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures, policies and strategies. At the heart of inclusive education is the vision to transform the education system so it can provide improved quality of education for all learners. Schools are inclusive when they are working towards full participation, community and equality through: respect for differences, respect for different learning styles, variations in methods, open and flexible curricula and welcoming each and every child. In other words, inclusive schools are learner-centered and child-friendly.

UNESCO’s definitions of inclusion stem from the pioneering 1994 Salamanca Conference, and emphasize that inclusion is a movement, directly linked to improvements in the education system as a whole:

“Inclusion is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children”.

Inclusion also involves restructuring cultures, policies and practices to respond to the diversity of students in their locality, learning and participation of all students vulnerable to exclusionary pressures (i.e. not just students with disabilities), improving schools for staff as well as students overcoming barriers to access and participation, the right of students to be educated in their local community, seeing diversity as a rich resource, not as a problem, mutually sustaining relationships between schools and communities and seeing inclusive education as an aspect of an inclusive society.
Inclusive Education is a human right; children have the right to learn together, they should not be discriminated because of their disability or learning difficulty. Children learn better academically and socially in an integrated environment. A revolt against institutionalization of children with special needs through various forms of special education surfaced in 1970s. It was argued that special education led to a permanent isolation of individuals with special needs. The United Nations has played a key role in building up a global movement on the Education for All (EFA). It states that everyone has the right to education and education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom. The convention on the Right of the Child (1989) reiterated that all children have the right to receive the kind of education that does not discriminate on the basis of disability, ethnicity, religion, language, gender, capabilities and so on. There has been a worldwide movement to include marginalized children in the ordinary school system and the UNESCO is a major flag holder in this movement. As a result, all member states are responding to the international declarations.

1.1.1 Overview of the Inclusion Movement

According to Bengt Lindqvist (the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Disability), “A dominant problem in the disability field is the lack of access to education for both children and adults with disabilities. As education is a fundamental right for all, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and protected through various international conventions, this is a very serious problem. In a majority of countries, there is a dramatic difference in the educational opportunities provided for disabled children and those provided for non-disabled children. It will simply not be possible to realize the goal of Education for All if we do not achieve a complete change in the situation.”

Addressing this widely recognized need for change, the Dakar Framework for Action adopted a World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) in 2000,
which affirmed the notion of education as a fundamental right and established the new millennium goal to provide every girl and boy with primary school education by 2015. EFA also clearly identified Inclusive Education as one of the key strategies to address the issues of marginalization and exclusion. The fundamental principle of EFA is that all children should have the opportunity to learn. Whereas, the fundamental principle of Inclusive Education is that all children should have the opportunity to learn together.

Historically, there is evidence that many children with special needs have been excluded and isolated from ordinary schools in many countries across the world (Weintraub, Abeson, Ballard, & LaVor, 1976). The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s brought the first signs of the end of segregating students with special needs. The case of *Brown v. Board of Education, Topeka* (1954) strongly influenced segregation in US schools. Linda Brown, a third grade student, was not allowed to attend a white elementary school that was very close to her home. Brown’s father, along with other African American families, took the matter of racial segregation to the US Supreme Court (Milner & Howard, 2004). The Supreme Court ruled that segregated educational facilities were inherently unfair. This ruling eventually led to the prohibition of segregation in US public schools (Frey & Wilson, 2009). Based on this landmark decision, advocates and parents of students with special needs began to call for legislation to stop the segregation of students with special needs (Blanchett, Mumford, & Beachum, 2005). However, with the Civil Rights Movement and the introduction of the Normalisation Principle, legislation has been enacted in many countries to promote the inclusion of students with special needs into regular schools. These Acts include the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA, 1975) in US, the 1978 Warnock Report and the 1981 Education Act in England, and the 1975 Loi d’Orientation in France (Armstrong, 2003). During the early twentieth century, many students with
special needs worldwide were either denied equal access to public schools or served inadequately (Weintraub & Abeson, 1976). Of those who received some sort of education, many were placed in segregated institutions (Rebell & Hughes, 1996). This segregated placement not only reduced interaction with “regular” children but also negatively affected educational opportunities. Educational services provided in segregated institutions were often limited to subjects such as general and social life skills (Wolery & Wilbers, 1994). Approaches to teaching and learning were based largely on the medical model of disability, which focuses on changing the children with disabilities instead of their environments (O'Day & Killeen, 2002). Saudi Arabia also passed similar legislation in 1987, Legislation of Disability, but the actual integration of students with special needs did not begin until 1994.

One of the great leaps forward in integration took place in 1975, when the US established the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA). This act incorporated the Principle of Normalisation by stipulating that individuals with special needs should be provided with a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment, that is, an ordinary classroom (Pirrie, 2008). The EAHCA was reauthorized in 1990, 1997, and 2004 and renamed in 2004 as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004). The IDEIA (2004) mandates implementation of an Individualized Education Program (IEP), “a written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised,” designed to address the unique needs of each student with special needs. The IDEIA (2004) also requires that students with special needs be more involved in the general education curriculum, and that special education teachers be highly qualified (Office of Special Education Programs, 2006). After the introduction of the EAHCA in the US, similar legislation was enacted in Europe and Australia. Following the establishment of a series of legislations, including the 1978 Warnock Report
and the 1981 Education Act in England (Armstrong, 2005), the 1975 Loi d’Orientation in France (Armstrong, 2003), and the Australian Disability Services Act in 1986 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2000), there was an ongoing debate about the integration of students with special needs throughout the 1980s. In England, there was a decrease not only in the number of students placed in segregated schools but also in the number of special schools in response to these Acts. These Acts led to the development of reform policies, including the 1989 Loi Jospin in France, which declared “the right of all children to attend an ordinary school as far as possible” (Armstrong, 2003) and the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) in Australia, which mandates that students with special needs have access to the educational services in their local school (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2000).

The year 1994 represents a significant international milestone for inclusive education. Ninety-two governments including India and twenty-five international organizations signed the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) Salamanca Statement (1994), which urged all signatories to facilitate movement towards inclusion of children with special needs in general schools. Article 2 of this statement indicates that:

*Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system (UNESCO, 1994).*

According to Peters (2007), the Salamanca Statement presents inclusive education as reflecting the principles of social equity and the social model of disability. The social model of disability, as concluded by Shakespeare (1998) is “first and foremost, a focus on the environmental and social
barriers which exclude people with perceived impairments from mainstream society”. Since its publication, the Salamanca Statement has been used by many countries to develop strategies for more inclusive education systems (Ainscow, 1997).

Inclusive education has become an important principle in education, figuring in the education policies of great numbers of countries (Dyson, 2004). However, “inclusion does not happen without planning, vision, resources, creative initiatives, constant energetic management and widespread goodwill from parents, teaching staff, educational authorities and the community” (Roux, Graham & Carrington, 1998). Particularly, teachers in the classroom are viewed as key elements in the implementation of inclusion; therefore, an understanding of teachers’ beliefs about inclusive education must be taken into consideration, because such beliefs might affect teachers’ behaviour towards students and their willingness to include students with special educational needs (Subban & Sharma, 2006). In the following section, teachers’ attitudes towards inclusion will be discussed.

1.1.2. History of Inclusive Education in India

In the ancient system of education (the guru-shishya parampara) all children were taught together, be it under a shady tree or in the Gurukul (school), whether normal, gifted or physically or intellectually disabled and were seen as worthy of the benefits of education, each according to her or his abilities. It was inclusive education in the truest sense.

Whatever the motivation, the fact remains that during the first three decades of the 19th century many changes were taking place and several initiatives are documented showing that the importance of educating the intellectually disabled as well as other disabled was well understood and efforts were being made constantly to provide for them. The first school for special education in North India in 1826 was started by Raja Kali Shankar Ghosal who facilitated visually impaired in Varanasi. The special school for
visually impaired was opened in Ambala, Punjab. The institute for the deaf and blind (Mumbai) introduced Braille in 1886. A special school in Kurseong in Bengal for the intellectually disabled (1918) and in Travancore in Kerala (1931), a separate school for “idiots” in Chennai made a clear distinction between the intellectually disabled and the mentally ill in 1936. In Ranchi during 1939 and 1941, a school for the intellectually disabled was a direct outcome of The Children’s Act. In 1944 another special school for intellectually disabled children started by Mrs Jai Vakil from her own residence in Mumbai. A major contribution was made about this time by Srinivasan in 1954, which began the very first special class in a mainstream school and was the precursor of the concept of integration in education.

At the end of the Second World War, Sir John Sargent who was Educational Advisor to the Government of India prepared what is called the Sargent Report in 1944. He recommended that provision for people with handicaps form an essential part of the national system of education. After India’s independence, education continued to be with the Ministry of Education and during this time the visionary Kothari Commission did recommend the inclusion of all children with disabilities in mainstream schools in their plan of Action (Jangira, Singh & Yadav 1995). Yet, in spite of this sound advice, the education system remained stagnant and in fact lost support earlier committed by the government for education of children with disabilities.

When India became free of the British colonizers in 1947, a partitioned and badly scarred nation needed to begin social reconstruction. The government began to become formally involved in policy decisions at a national level. In 1953, the Central Social Welfare Board was formed. Between 1960 and 1975, several committees were appointed to recommend a national policy which specifically focused on the needs of children from low socio-economic areas. This resulted in the formulation, in 1974, of the National Policy for Children and also the National Children’s Board. The major achievement was however the launch of the ICDS program, also in 1974, the
Integrated Child Development Program, (ICDS) as a part of India’s Fifth five year plan. This is an excellent concept but the prime initial objectives were the decrease in infant mortality and training women in health care and nutrition. It broadened its scope only in 1975 to include a psycho-social component on Non Formal Early Childhood Education but as just one of the total of 6 components it was designed to support. The District Primary Education Program, which followed, focused on integration in the areas of teacher training, removing architectural barriers and in providing appropriate aids, did fair but was unable to include a vast majority of children with disabilities in mainstream education (Pandey & Advani, 1995).

In 1974, a major shift in education for the child with disability was achieved with the launch of the comprehensive Integrated Education for the Disabled Child (IEDC). The aim was to provide children with moderate disabilities, both facilities and financial support. This was implemented in 15,000 schools in 26 states and Union Territories and reportedly covered 65,000 children with disabilities in mainstream schools. In a bid towards the implementation of this project, the Government launched Project Integrated Education Development (PIED), which provided teacher training, methodology for identification of children and school facilities as support services.

It was only in 1986, when the Parliament of India adopted the National Policy on Education (NPE) that for the first time equality of opportunity was formally stated as a goal of education and the phrase “Education for the Handicapped” was used. But at this time the policy advocated only the integration of children with loco-motor disabilities and others with mild disabilities in mainstream schools. It also enabled the setting up of a team of experts under the Chairmanship of Behrul Islam in 1987 to study the problems of disabled children and became the core of the comprehensive legislation provided later in the Disabilities Act of 1995.
India is a signatory to the 1990 United Nations World Declaration on Education for All, (EFA) which reaffirmed the rights of all children including children with disabilities to access education in regular school settings and to the Biwako Millenium Framework for Action towards an inclusive, barrier free and rights based society for persons with disability, the Declaration on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asia Pacific Region. India also subscribed to the philosophy of the 1993 UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the Salamanca Statement and Frame work For Action (1994).

The logical follow-on, was therefore the recognition and conceptualization of a major shift from integrated schools to one which was more inclusive and in December 1995 the government of India passed a bill in Parliament called “The Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation Bill for Persons with Disability” or The Disability Act in short.

A Draft of National Policy for Persons with Disability was circulated on 15th of June 2005 requesting comments from various stakeholders. With specific reference to education and in recognition of the fact that one model may not be suitable to a country with such a diverse population and the wide diversity of needs for persons with disability in different environmental and social conditions, the policy covers a variety of educational options such as special education, distance education, itinerant teacher models, remedial teaching, home based, CBR model, home based education, education through an open learning system, alternative schooling etc.

1.1.3. Indian initiatives for Education, Employment and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities

A reference to the Government of India report on Blindness, 1944 in this context is very relevant. Most of the modern Educational programmes for the Visually Handicapped in this country owe their origin to the
recommendations of this report. It was in accordance with its recommendations that the Ministry of Education established a unit for the blind in April 1947. In this connection the various commissions, committees, Acts, schemes have been made, implemented and constituted for persons with disabilities in India, for their education, employment and rehabilitation by collaboration with the Government and Non-governmental organization. Some important among them are given below in chronological order:

1. **Sargent Report (1944)**

   The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) report, written by John Sargent, the British chief educational advisor, observed that the Indian government had not done much for the education of the disabled. What had been done was due to the voluntary efforts and the country could ‘profitably borrow’ from the experiences and achievements of those countries which had been active in this field (CABE, 1944, p.111). The 1944, Sargent Report also referred to the 1936 CABE recommendation, which had directed the provincial governments not to neglect the education of the handicapped.

   The report can be said to be a landmark in the policy on ‘Integration’ of disabled children in general schools, though it continued its recommendation for special schools, but only when the nature and extent of their defect (made) is necessary. The report is also important from two points of view. First, it recommended that the provision for the disabled should form an essential part of a national system of education and should be administered by the Education Department. Second, 10 percent of the budget for basic and high schools had been set aside for the (educational) services of the disabled.

   Special education in India continues to be administered by the Welfare Ministry (now called the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment) and is not a part of the regular system of education.
2. The National Education commission (1964-66)

The first education commission in India, popularly known as the Kothari Commission, began the section on handicapped children in the chapter ‘Towards Equalization of Educational Opportunities’ in its report in a similar tone as reflected in the 1944 post war report. ‘Very little has been done in this field so far… any great improvement in the situation does not seem to be practicable in the near future… there is much in the field that we could learn from the educationally advanced countries, (Education Commission, 1966).

It was evidently in favour of making education of the handicapped an integral part of the general education system. The commission suggested educational facilities to be extended to these four category: The Blind, the Deaf, the Orthopaedically Handicapped and the Mentally Retarded. The Education Commission further felt that children would be constrained by two main considerations: lack of teachers and financial resources. Furthermore, the Kothari Commission recommended a Cell, at NCERT, to study in this country and abroad, the work being done in the field of education for the handicapped and prepare material for their teachers.

3. National Education Policy (1968)

The 1968, The National Education Policy followed the commission’s recommendations and suggested the expansion of education facilities for physically and mentally handicapped children and the development of ‘Integrated Programme’ enabling handicapped children to study in regular schools. Eight years later in 1974, a scheme for the integrated education of disabled children or, the IEDC was started by the welfare ministry.


Twenty years later, the NPE (MHRD, 1986) which has been guiding the education system in India, under its broad objectives of ‘education for
equality’ proposed the following measures for the education of the handicapped:

1. Wherever it is feasible, the education of children with motor handicaps and other mild handicaps will be common with others.

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

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

4. Teacher training programmes will be reoriented, in particular for teachers of primary classes to deal with the special difficulties of handicapped children, and

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

**a) Programme of Action (1990, MHRD)**

The Programme of Action (POA, MHRD, 1990) outlined the measures to implement the policy, which included massive in-service training programmes for teachers, orientation programmes for administrators, development of supervisory expertise in the resource institutions for school education at the district and block levels, and provision of incentives like supply of aids, appliances, textbooks and school uniforms.

**b) Programme of Action (1992, MHRD)**

The NPE/POA 1986 was modified and a new POA was chalked out in 1992. The 1992 POA made an ambitious commitment for universal enrolment by the end of the Ninth Plan for both categories of children: those who could be educated in general primary schools and those who required education in special schools or special classes in general schools (MHRD, 1992). It also called for the reorientation of the pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes.

The committee included education in the Draft Legislation. It mentioned that the state should endeavour to provide free and universal elementary education to children with physical and mental disabilities. The state shall also provide assistance to them for education and training at the secondary and higher levels. It also emphasized promotion of integrated education and continuation of residential education.

6. Project Integrated Education for the Disabled (PIED)

The National Council for Educational Research and Training implemented PIED during 1987 with the financial support from UNICEF, which provided support for the development of instructional material, training of personnel, mobilizing community support, training of parents and coordination of the project in remote and rural areas and difficult places. It also extended support for identification and assessment of children with disabilities, establishment of resource rooms, provision of aids and appliances and allowances for children with disabilities.


The Department of social welfare, Government of India launched the centrally sponsored scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled children in 1974 with 100% central assistance. The Scheme provided funding for rehabilitation aids and equipment, educational material, training of resource teachers, establishment of pre-school and parent counselling centres, transport allowance, removal of architectural barriers in school buildings, etc.

With the coverage of education of children with disabilities in the National Policy on Education during 1986, the scheme was shifted to the Ministry of Human Resource Development. The scheme purports to provide educational opportunities for children with disabilities in
common schools. A large number of State governments have already adopted the scheme. They have established Administrative Cells for monitoring the Scheme. However, coverage of visually impaired children under the scheme at present is negligible.

7. Rehabilitation Council of India Act 1992

The Rehabilitation Council of India was established by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, India in 1992 for regulating the training of rehabilitation professionals, maintenance of a Central Rehabilitation register and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto which is again a right step in the right directions. It provides a regulatory mechanism for development of human resources in the field. For the visually impaired persons, various courses have already been started.


To give effect to the proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of the People with Disabilities in the Asian and Pacific Region, the Parliament enacted the Persons with Disabilities Act (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act 1995, which came into force with effect from 7th February 1996. The Act desires the appropriate governments and local authorities to ensure that every child with a disability has access to free education in an appropriate environment until he attains the age of eighteen years. It encourages promotion of integrated, residential education, functional literacy, and non formal education, education through open school or open universities. It desires initiation of research for designing and developing new assistive devices and developing human resources. It also ensures reservation of at least three percent seats in the educational institutes of persons with disabilities. It also encourages preparation of
comprehensive education schemes with a variety of facilities for such persons.

9. District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)

Evolving from the national experience with area specific projects is an ambitious nationwide plan, popularly known as District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), to put local communities in charge of education in their area and enhance investments in primary education. As a first step, a five year plan for the selected districts has been chalked out. From the year 1995, the education of children with disabilities has also been included as integral component of the programme. All such children in the selected districts would be enrolled for inclusive education at the primary level. The DPEP envisages following measures in this regard:

- Providing all children, including children with disabilities, with access to primary education either in the formal system or through non formal education programme.
- Facilitation access for disadvantaged groups such as girls, socially backward communities and children with disabilities.
- Improving effectiveness of education through training of teachers, improvement of learning materials and upgrading of infrastructure facilities.
- Appointment of special teachers at district and cluster level for providing support services to class teachers.
- Provision of assistive devices and educational devices to these children.
- Involvement of experts in disability development in the State Coordination committee.
• Orientation of Master Trainers at the State and district level in respect of educational needs of children with disabilities.

• DPEP is an excellent and bold step towards promotion of inclusive education of children with disabilities.


The National Trust is an established as a statutory body under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, set up under the “National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act” (Act 44 of 1999). This act is meant for strengthening the PWD Act, 1995 especially gives provision for Persons with Autism, Mentally retarded and Cerebral Palsy.


The following framework of the Action Plan and list of activities has been developed as a result of the initial consultations. The plan covers the inclusion in education of children and young persons with disabilities. The different sectors covered in the plan are:

1. Early Childhood Care education
2. Elementary Education
3. Secondary Education
4. Higher and Technical Education and
5. Vocational Training.

The main objectives of Action were:

(i) To ensure that no child is denied admission in mainstream education.

(ii) To ensure that every child would have the right to access an Aanganwadi and school and no child would be turned back on the ground of disabilities.
(iii) To ensure that mainstream and specialist training institutions serving persons with disabilities, in the government or in the non-government sector, facilitate the growth of a cadre of teacher trained to work within the principles of ‘Inclusion’.

(iv) To facilitate access of girls with disabilities and disabled students from rural and remote areas to government hostels.

(v) To provide home based learning for persons with severe, multiple and intellectual disability.

(vi) To promote distance education for those who require an individualized pace of learning.

(vii) To emphasize job training and job oriented vocational training, and

(viii) To promote understanding of the paradigm shift from charity to development through a measure of awareness, motivation and sensitization campaign.

12. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Education for All Campaign)

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is a historic stride towards achieving the long cherished goal of Universalization of Elementary Education through a time bound integrated approach, in partnership with states. This movement promises to change the face of the elementary education sector of the country, assumes to provide useful and quality elementary education to all children including those with disabilities in the 6-14 age group by the year 2010. It makes a provision up to Rs.1200 per child for integration of disabled children as per specific proposal. The 86th Constitutional Amendment, which has made free and compulsory education a right of all children from 6-14 years of age, has given further thrust to the goal of UEE. The objectives of UEE cannot be achieved without including children with special needs under the ambit of elementary education.
One of the focus areas of SSA is to increase access, enrolment, retention of all children and to reduce school drop outs. The emphasis of SSA is also on providing quality education to all children. Rarely had it been considered that the special educational needs of these children could be met by providing adequate resource support to them in regular schools and giving them an opportunity to receive education in the most appropriate environment. Hence, education of children with special needs is considered an important area in SSA. Hence, a need was felt to develop a comprehensive manual on education of children with special needs. The manual indicates how the programme of inclusive education for children with special needs could be developed by each state and district.

13. National Policy for Persons with Disabilities

This policy was released by ministry of social justice and empowerment of India, on 10th Feb 2006. The policy covers comprehensive areas related to persons with disabilities. The National Policy recognizes that persons with Disabilities are valuable human resource for the country and seeks to create an environment that provides those equal opportunities, protection of their rights and full participation in society. The focus of the policy shall be on the following heads:


14. Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan

The scheme of Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS) was launched in 2009-10 replacing the earlier scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC). It provides assistance for the inclusive education of disabled children in class IX-XII. The aim of the Scheme is to enable all students with disabilities, after completing eight years of elementary schooling, to pursue four years of secondary schooling in an inclusive and enabling environment.

The scheme covers all children passing out of elementary school and studying at secondary and higher secondary stage in Government, local body and Government-aided schools, with one or more disabilities as defined under the persons with disabilities act (1995) and the National Trust for the welfare of persons with autism, cerebral palsy, Mental Retardation & Multiple Disabilities Act (1999), namely i) Blindness, ii) Low vision, iii) Leprosy cured, iv) Hearing impairment, v) Locomotor disabilities, vi) Mental retardation, vii) Mental illness, viii) Autism, and ix) Cerebral Palsy.

15. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2011

India has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) and undertaken the obligation to ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all Persons with Disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability. In fulfillment of this international commitment, the country is obligated to enact suitable legislation in furtherance of the rights recognized in the UN CRPD. It is proposed to repeal the extant legislation and replace it with a comprehensive law.
which is in conformity with the UN CRPD.

The salient features of the proposed legislation were as follows:

• to guarantee equality and non-discrimination to all persons with disabilities;

• to recognize legal capacity of all persons with disabilities and make provision for support where required to exercise such legal capacity;

• to recognize the multiple and aggravated discrimination faced by women with disabilities and induct a gendered understanding in both the rights and the programmatic interventions;

• to recognize the special vulnerabilities of children with disabilities and ensure that they are treated on an equal basis with other children;

• to mandate proactive interventions for persons with disabilities who are elderly, confined to their homes, abandoned and segregated or living in institutions and also those who need high support;

• to establish National and State Disability Rights Authorities which facilitate the formulation of disability policy and law with active participation of persons with disabilities; dismantle structural discrimination existing against persons with disabilities and enforce due observance of regulations promulgated under this Act for the protection, promotion and enjoyment of all rights guaranteed in this Act;

• to specify civil and criminal sanctions for wrongful acts and omissions.

1.2 TEACHERS’ ATTITUDE TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The movement of inclusive education has gained momentum in recent years; a key element in the successful implementation of the policy is the views of the personnel who have the major responsibility for implementing it i.e. the
teachers. It is argued that teachers’ beliefs and attitudes are critical in ensuring the success of inclusive practices since teachers’ acceptance of the policy of inclusion is likely to affect their commitment to implementing it (Norwich, 1994). Teachers are perceived to be integral to the implementation of inclusive education (Haskell, 2000). Research communicates the view that teachers are the key to the success of inclusionary programs (Cant, 1994), as they are viewed as linchpins in the process of including students with disabilities into regular classes (Whiting & Young, 1995). Other studies acknowledge that inclusive education can only be successful if teachers are part of the team driving this process (Malone, Gallagher & Long, 2001).

Historically, teachers have not been favourably disposed to the policy of increased inclusion of children with special needs within the regular classroom (Forlin, 1995). Teachers’ attitudes towards inclusive education appear to have important correlates with actual classroom practice, although the direction of causality is not clear. Buell, Hallam, McCormick & Scheer, (1999) reported a positive relationship between teachers’ attitudes towards inclusion and their belief that they could influence the educational outcomes of children with special needs. Fritz & Miller (1995) found that inclusion was an impossible obstacle for some teachers; however, others have seen it as an opportunity for personal and professional growth while contributing to the dynamic field of education. It would appear that the attitudes of educators toward the inclusion of students with disabilities are multidimensional and complex. Positive attitudes are considered to encourage the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classrooms, while negative attitudes support low achievement and poor acceptance of students with disabilities into mainstream settings (Beattie, Anderson & Antonak, 1997). Attitudes towards inclusion have an important role in the smooth and successful progression of inclusion and the positive outcomes. Hegarthy (1994) and Pumfrey (2000) particularly indicated the important role of teachers’ attitude in the success or failure of inclusion of SEN
students into mainstream classrooms because they can influence the children of their class, their colleagues or the parents of their students. Inclusion produces many benefits for CWSN in the form of their development i.e. personal, social, intellectual etc. But, the disappointing social outcomes of inclusive education raise the question why students with SEN experience difficulties in participating socially in regular education. In recent years, it has been increasingly suggested that attitudes of those directly involved (i.e. teachers, parents and typically developing students) play a role in this (Nowicki & Sandieson, 2002).

Although, social psychology describes the concept of attitude in various ways, Gall, Borg & Gall (1996) describes the attitude as “an attitude is an individual’s viewpoint or disposition toward a particular ‘object’ (a person, a thing, an idea, etc.)”. Attitudes are considered to have three components: 1) cognitive, 2) affective and 3) behavioural (Eagle & Chaiken, 1993). The cognitive component consists of the individual’s beliefs or knowledge about the attitude object. Teachers’ beliefs or knowledge about educating students with Special Education Needs (SEN) in inclusive settings can represent this component. Feelings about the attitude object refer to the affective component. Regarding inclusive education, this may reflect teachers’ feelings about educating students with SEN. The behavioural component reflects someone’s predisposition to act toward the attitude object in a particular way. This might include teachers’ views on how to act with a student with SEN in his/her classroom.

It is known that teachers are of great influence on a child’s development (Bowlby, 1982), suggesting that this also includes the development of particular attitudes. Consequently, positive attitudes of typically developing students may lead to accepting students with SEN (or vice versa). It is obvious that attitudes of the directly involved are important in relation to inclusive education.
1.3 TEACHERS’ PERCEIVED EFFICACY TO TEACH IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

The concept of self-efficacy was established by Bandura in 1977 who has defined it as a judgment of the capability to execute a given type of performance. Self-efficacy is grounded in the social cognitive theory, which claims that people are able to exercise some control over their self-development and life circumstances even though many things depend at least partly on chance. Seen from this perspective, people are self-organizing, proactive, self-regulating and self-reflecting. Self-efficacy is constructed from four main sources: mastery experiences, seeing people similar to oneself manage task demands successfully, social persuasion and somatic & emotional states (Bandura, 1977; Tschannen & Woolfolk, 2007). Self-efficacy influences how much effort people put forth, how long they will persist in the face of obstacles, how resilient they are in dealing with failures, and how much stress or depression they experience in a difficult situation (Bandura, 1997). Applying this concept to the teaching profession, self-efficacy is a teacher’s belief that they can produce desirable changes in student achievement. Teachers with high teacher self-efficacy expect and believe they can successfully provide challenging student instruction that will increase student performance. Teachers behave in ways that will enhance their views of themselves as competent teachers. Conversely, low teacher self-efficacy manifests when teachers do not expect to be successful with certain students, are less likely to persevere in preparation and delivery of instruction, and retreat at the first signs of difficulty (Tollefson, 2000). The context-specific nature of teacher efficacy also makes it worthwhile to test the theoretical assumptions underlying self-efficacy in diverse cultural contexts and to use domain-specific research instruments that emphasise areas such as teaching science, teaching with technology, or like in the current study, teaching in inclusive settings (Klassen & Chiu, 2011).

The global move towards more inclusive education has had implications for
the research on teacher self-efficacy, and there is a growing body of research on teacher efficacy for inclusive education (e.g. Almog & Shechtman, 2007; Leyser, Zeiger, & Romi, 2011; Malinen, Savolainen, & Xu, 2012; Romi & Leyser, 2006). The research questions of these studies have often dealt with issues such as the correlation between teachers’ self-efficacy and their coping with behavioural problems or the effect of teacher self-efficacy on attitudes towards inclusive education.

The term teacher efficacy comes from self efficacy. Guskey & Passaro (1994), have defined teacher efficacy as “teachers’ belief or conviction that they can influence how well students learn, even those who may be considered difficult or unmotivated”. The importance of teacher efficacy emerges from its cyclical nature: Higher levels of efficacy beliefs lead to greater efforts by teachers, which in turn leads to better performances, which again provides information for forming higher efficacy beliefs (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk & Hoy, 1998). Efficacy beliefs, especially those of experienced teachers, seem to remain quite stable when the teachers are exposed to new training. Yet, even experienced teachers with firm efficacy beliefs may have to re-evaluate their beliefs when facing new challenges, such as teaching in a new type of setting. In addition, one must remember that teacher efficacy is context-specific. Teachers may feel efficacious for teaching certain subjects to certain students in certain settings while perceiving themselves as less efficacious under different circumstances (Tschannen & Woolfolk, 2007). A major attribute of effective teaching is teachers’ sense of self-efficacy, which influences teachers’ behavior, motivation, and impact on student outcomes. Teacher self-efficacy impacts the level of motivation which a teacher exhibits towards their instructional behaviors. Teachers’ self-efficacy has recently been found to be a distinctive and significant predictor of classroom practices (Guo, Piasta, Justice & Kaderavek, 2010). Teacher self-efficacy, a key motivational belief, influences teacher performance, building from four sources: mastery
experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and psychological & emotional states (Bandura, 1977).

The global move toward more inclusive education has also had implications for the research on teacher self-efficacy. There seems to be growing interest towards what is required from teachers of inclusive classrooms and many recently developed instruments measuring self-efficacy contain items dealing with student diversity (Chan, 2008 and Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2006). Furthermore, the results of Soodak, Podell & Lehman (1998) indicated that US general educators’ receptivity towards inclusion was associated with higher teacher efficacy. A path analysis by Brownell & Pajares (1999) revealed that teacher efficacy beliefs had a direct effect on their perceived success in instructing special education students studying in regular classrooms. Moreover, in an early comprehensive study of predicting teachers’ attitudes to inclusion, Soodak, Podell & Lehman (1998) found that teachers’ sense of teaching efficacy was one of the strongest predictors of their attitudes to inclusion. They also found that teachers with a low sense of efficacy demonstrated anxiety and rejected the idea of including students with special needs in their classrooms. In a series of studies, Sharma, Forlin & Loreman (2008); Forlin, Loreman, Sharma & Earle (2009) and Sharma, Moore & Sonawane (2009) examined the relationship between pre-service teachers’ attitudes towards inclusion with variables such as contact with people with disabilities, knowledge of local legislation & policies, and confidence level. The researchers found that confidence in teaching in inclusive classrooms was the single best predictor of participants’ attitudes. Several studies have found that teachers who have previous experience teaching students with special educational needs hold more positive attitudes than teachers with less experience.

According to Bandura (1997), teachers’ perceived efficacy influences both the kind of environment that teachers create for their students as well as their judgments about different teaching tasks they will perform to enhance
student learning. Applying this theory to an inclusive education scenario, a teacher with high teacher efficacy in implementing inclusive practices would believe that a student with special learning needs can be effectively taught in the regular classroom. Alternatively, teachers with poor efficacy for implementing inclusive practices would consider that there is very little they can do to include a student with special learning needs in a regular classroom, and thus they may be disinclined to try. This theory implies that teachers’ sense of efficacy affects their behaviour and actions, as well as consequences of actions (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk & Hoy, 1998). In summary, high teacher efficacy can be viewed as a key ingredient to create successful inclusive classroom environments.

1.4 TEACHERS’ PERCEIVED STRESS COPING STRATEGIES TO TEACH IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

In India, perception of people regarding teaching as an easy and half time job is a myth. Due to the high expectations from the parents and awareness of the public, it has become more challenging and stressful job. The duties and responsibilities as per RTE Act, 2009 is an addition in this regard. Teachers are a part of the profession which has been considered as man making since time immemorial. It is a fact that teaching is a job of 24 hours a day and seven days a week. The duties and responsibilities of a teacher do not end within school hours, these go beyond that. Inclusion of CWSN in regular classroom is the major addition in the responsibilities and duties of school teachers since SSA at elementary level and RMSA at secondary level have been implemented. Unreadiness of school teachers to teach CWSN, extra time required by CWSN, high pupil teacher ratio in Indian classrooms and educational environment under certain barriers bring teachers under stress.

Stress has been defined by Greenberg (1984) as “the physical, mental, or emotional reaction resulting from an individual’s response to environmental tensions, conflicts, pressures, and other stimuli”. Teaching is a stressful
occupation. According to Lewis (2006), teaching has got to be one of the top 5 most stressful careers in the world. In fact, another report on occupational stress in the United Kingdom found that among the groups reporting highest stress, teaching ranked first (Smith & Smith 2000). Teaching and education in general is a very stressful occupation (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Teaching has the highest degree of career turnover of any profession (Lewis, 2006). Adams (1999) found that the impacts of teacher stress can include implications for their ability to teach, their personal lives, and their interactions with their students. Adams also noted that when teacher stress became a factor, student achievement and motivation decreased. Teacher stress can come from a variety of sources. Kyriacou (2001) delineated the top stressors in the general teaching population into factors which included: teaching pupils who lacked motivation, maintaining discipline, time pressure and workload, and coping with change. Teachers come into daily contact with pupils, confronting innumerable disruptions and difficulties with special need pupils, with the absence of sufficient resources and the lack of support. Their work does not end when they come home, and in order to withstand all this, a teacher has to adopt strategies of coping and adjustment. If the ability to cope is low or dependent only on basic and not well-developed coping strategies, this might lead to negative emotional reactions and burnout among teachers (Montgomery & Rupp, 2005).

When individuals experience stress or face demanding situation, they adopt ways of dealing with it, as they cannot remain in a continued state of tension. How the individual deals with stressful situations is known as ‘coping’. There are two major targets of coping: changing ourselves or changing our environment. Coping refers to a person’s active efforts to resolve stress and create new ways of handling new situations at each life stage (Erikson, 1959). In general, coping is defined as constantly changing
cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific internal and/or external demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Teachers interact with the stressful environment and employ a variety of coping strategies to manage that stress in an effort to lessen the impacts of the stress on physical, emotional, or psychological well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Coping is a complex construct, which is given different meanings by various theorists. Some focus on behavioral observations, others give attention to thoughts and cognitive structure (Beutler & Moos, 2003). Personal coping strategies are represented by sub-categories (Murray-Harvey, Slee, Lawson, Silins, Banfield & Russell, 2000). Cognitive strategies are based on positive thinking. Physical strategies are comprised of such things as physical exercise and other recreational activities. Behavioural strategies are comprised of routines such as housework where little thought is required. Emotional strategies include such things as self-deprecation and rational/time organization and the activities which set priorities for relaxing and work. Professional coping strategies are indicated by knowledge & self-management and preparation & planning for teaching. Social coping consists of contact with family and friends while institutional coping refers to using the organizational structure interacting with others at school. In the research conducted by Kyriacou & Chien (2004), it was found that the best way to overcome stress was to adopt coping strategies such as ‘ensuring a healthy family life’, besides ‘someone is standing by you and understands you’. Other coping means are: ‘to ensure a good understanding of the material you have to teach’; ‘to learn how to control your emotions’; ‘to see the humor in the situation’; and ‘to rest after work’.

Kyriacou (2000) categorizes coping strategies into two classes; direct action techniques and palliative techniques. Direct action strategies refer to actions
that a teacher can do to eliminate a source of stress. When using this strategy, a teacher first identifies the source of stress and then performs an action that will successfully eliminate the stressor. An effective direct action technique should eradicate the source of stress. Kyriacou identifies five main categories of direct action coping: direct attack, enhance skills & ability to act, adapt to the situation, remove the source of stress, and seek help from colleagues. Some of these techniques involve utilizing skills that a teacher has available to him/her, while others involve learning new skills. Kyriacou (2000) noted that it is important to match the action to the stressor and suggested that determining which action fits better with a problem may be an easier task for an experienced teacher who has built a repertoire of skills. On the other hand, palliative strategies do not deal with the source of stress, but are aimed at lessening the negative feelings associated with stress (Kyriacou, 2000). Palliative strategies can be physical or mental. Mental techniques are any strategy that allows a teacher to alter his/her appraisal of a situation. If a teacher can view a situation as less threatening, then that will help to alleviate the experience of stress. The four main mental strategies are putting things into perspective, seeing the humor in situations, thinking positively, and maintaining emotional control. Physical palliative techniques are also strategies that a teacher can use to reduce the negative feelings generated by stress. Physical techniques include using relaxation methods, exercise, and meditation. Although, Kyriacou (2000) indicated that direct action coping is potentially the most effective coping method to completely eliminate stress, he also acknowledged that palliative coping is important. There are situations in which palliative strategies are the only coping option, as direct action coping may result in maladaptive consequences. For example, challenging or confronting an aggressive boss with whom a teacher has problems may result in further relationship problems or being fired. Teachers who find it difficult to cope with the behavior of pupils take various measures to disregard it, either by concealing
the problem and pushing it away (not telling anyone about it), self blame, worry and anxiety, development of eating and sleeping disorders, or even by becoming ill (Lewis, Romi, Qui & Katz, 2005). Montgomery & Rupp (2005) defined two main categories of coping strategies, active coping strategies and passive coping strategies. Active coping strategies can be cognitive strategies (changes in perspective, imposing self control, rational distancing of oneself); behavioral strategies (determining borderlines to the job, requesting advice from others, engaging in relaxation exercises); and emotional strategies (remaining calm and quiet, thinking positively). On the other hand, passive coping strategies such as resignation, drinking, wishful thinking, and avoidance, are characterized by a lack of engagement with the stressful event.

Students’ behavioural problems in general, and behavioural problems of students with special needs in particular, present a great challenge to teachers in inclusive classrooms. Studies of teacher effectiveness indicate that teachers’ perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs directly influence their decision-making and actual behaviour in the classroom (Pajares, 1992). According to researchers, stress is an imbalance between the demands being made upon an individual and the resources available to help cope with the demands (Esteve, 2000; Troman & Woods, 2001 and Wood & McCarthy, 2002). If personal resources and the external resources an individual can access to meet job demands are perceived to be equal to the task, then the job may seem simply challenging. But, if the demands are perceived to be overwhelming and exceeding an individual’s capabilities or the resources available, they become stressors triggering mental and physical stress.

1.5 TEACHERS’ PERCEIVED LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE TO TEACH IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

In order to define the concept of confidence, the researcher based on Bandura’s concept of self-efficiency (1977, 1997). Thus, teachers’ confidence refers both to the teachers’ perceived likelihood of success in
teaching inclusive classrooms and on how far the teacher perceives success as being under his or her control. According to Keller (1987), also based on Bandura, confidence has different components: interest (refers to the attention factors in the environment; relevance (refers to goal-oriented activities); expectancy (refers to one’s own expectation for being successful) and outcomes (refers to the reinforcement value of instruction). Inclusive school classrooms are becoming more diverse with general education teachers responsible for meeting the educational needs of all of their students. This requires that they have the knowledge, skills and confidence to support students with diverse learning needs.

Gaining confidence in their teaching skills and developing their teaching ability in general, are not just the concern of teachers who are new to the profession, but also of experienced teachers when they meet new challenges which seem to threaten their long-standing values and beliefs about learning and teaching. Just think of how many times you have asked yourself the following questions when you have had to face a new task: ‘Can I do that?’ ‘Will I be able to do it well?’ After a while you may find yourself asking: ‘How can I do better?’ These questions are straightly related to the confidence of the teachers concerned.

Self-confidence and teaching ability to teach in classroom with diversity are closely related, and working on either concern leads to improvement on the other. The more the teacher develops his/her teaching abilities, the more confident the teacher will become in his/her teaching. In other words, the more confident a teacher becomes in his/her teaching skills, the better prepared teacher is to move on to ‘the next level’, i.e. deepen the understanding of learning and teaching, find out about the latest learning and teaching theories, and try out new teaching practices, thus developing teaching abilities.
Despite the fact that the number of students with special needs in general education courses is increasing, review of related literature revealed that many teachers perceive themselves as being unprepared to address these students’ needs. Favourable teacher attitudes towards inclusion of students with disabilities were identified as the strongest predictors of success or failure of inclusion programs (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). It was also found important to note that favourable attitudes alone were not sufficient. Teachers also need to have necessary support from school leaders in the form of additional time for planning, modified teaching material and teacher aides (assistants) to ensure success of implementing inclusive education (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Therefore, an important component of improving teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education may be to address their level of confidence to teach in an inclusive classroom.

Teachers working in inclusive education scenario, experience increase students’ diversity within their classroom. To deal the students with special needs in the classroom, confidence level among teachers is one of the important ingredients in the area of successful implementation of inclusive education. For better understanding of teachers’ perceived level of confidence to teach in inclusive education, researcher concentrates on various dimensions of confidence namely; ‘Confidence in Creating Appropriate Environment for CWSN’ (CCAE) (Knowing relevance of inclusive classroom environment in the development (learning) of CWSN), ‘Confidence in Understanding Needs of CWSN’ (CUN) (Showing interest in the different/additional needs of CWSN), ‘Confidence in Teaching-Learning Process’ (CTLP) (Knowing the reinforcement value/output value of instruction/teaching given by own self (teacher)), ‘Confidence in Evaluation’ (CE) (Knowing relevance of evaluation of CWSN and self-expectancy in evaluating CWSN in inclusive settings), ‘Confidence in Preparing IEP’ (CP-IEP) (Self-expectancy of teachers in preparing IEP for different CWSN in different situations), ‘Confidence in Implementing IEP’ (CI-IEP) (Self-expectancy of teachers in implementing IEP for different CWSN in different situations), ‘Confidence in Curriculum
Adaptation’ (CCA) (Knowing relevance of curriculum for CWSN and self-expectancy in adapting the same for CWSN) and ’Confidence in Training’ (CT) (Self-expectancy in dealing with CWSN as an outcome of professional (Teaching) training).

1.6 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

India is planning to make all the schools in the country disabled friendly by 2020 and all educational institutions including hostels, libraries, laboratories and buildings to have barrier free access for the disabled. The Ministry of Human Resource Development is also planning to avail study materials, Talking Text Books, Reading Machines and computers with speech software progressively in addition to an adequate number of Braille books. To make this Herculean task a reality, our schools must be committed for the upliftment of students with disability. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan are the flagship programmes for making inclusion a reality. The objectives of SSA and RMSA can only be realized, if Children with Special Needs (CWSN) are also included under the ambit of school education. Realizing the importance of integrating special children in regular schools, SSA and RMSA framework has made adequate provisions for educating CWSN in their neighbourhood schools. Though, SSA and RMSA have been providing adequate facilities to make schools inclusive in the real sense and we are having enough funds. Still, it has been seen that schools even in the metropolitan cities are lacking infrastructural facilities for students with disabilities. Teachers are still having negative attitude towards the inclusion of students with disabilities, they are still not having proper awareness regarding inclusive education.

According to Bandura (1997), teachers’ perceived efficacy influences both the kind of environment that teachers create for their students as well as their judgements about different teaching tasks to enhance students’ learning. Following the theory of Bandura, in an inclusive education scenario, a teacher with high teacher efficacy in implementing inclusive practices would believe that a student with special learning needs can be effectively taught in the regular classroom. Alternatively, teachers with poor
efficacy for implementing inclusive practices would consider that there is very little they can do to include a student with special learning needs in a regular classroom, and thus, they may be disinclined to try.

It is important to examine the attitudes of mainstream teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular settings as their perceptions may influence their behavior toward and acceptance of such students (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003). Van Reusen, Shoho, & Barker, (2000) reported that the success of an inclusionary program may be at risk if regular classroom teachers hold negative perceptions toward the inclusion of students with disabilities. Thus, negative attitude, less concerns towards CWSN and little sentiments among teacher regarding CWSN and inclusion of CWSN in regular classrooms are the major obstacles in the successful implementation of inclusive education. Level of confidence to teach students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms is also a prominent factor to determine teachers’ attitude towards inclusion. Sigafoos & Elkins (1994) concluded that mainstream educators generally lacked confidence as they attempted to include students with disabilities into their classes. This may be a result of lacking proficiency about adapting the regular education curriculum to accommodate students with individual learning needs (Sigafoos & Elkins, 1994). Teachers acquire increased competence as a result of increased training in the field of inclusive education (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000). Inadequate knowledge with regard to instructional techniques and curricular adaptations, which contributes to decreased confidence, may be a factor which influences a teacher's attitude toward inclusive education (Lesar, Brenner, Habel, & Coleman, 1997). Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk & Hoy, (1998) concluded that the theory implies that teachers’ sense of efficacy affects their behaviour and actions, as well as consequences of actions. Several mainstream educators view the philosophy of inclusive education as an exciting challenge, the stresses associated with its introduction being seen as life-sustaining, enjoyable and beneficial
(Bernard, 1990); on the other hand, it has been noted that the experience of being an inclusive educator is challenging enough to cause teachers to become physiologically and psychologically stressed (Whiting & Young, 1995). Fritz & Miller (1995) found that inclusion was an impossible obstacle for some teachers; however, others have seen it as an opportunity for personal and professional growth while contributing to the dynamic field of education.

It has been observed from the literature that the positive attitude of teachers is the key factor in the success of inclusive education. Researchers have also provided evidence that the teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education is a dependent variable which can be influenced by so many other variables such as efficacy of teachers, stress, coping and confidence to teach in the presence of CWSN in the classroom. Research studies conducted in the various countries have also revealed that more efficient, de-stressed and more confident teachers with regards to teaching CWSN, often have revealed more positive attitude towards inclusive education.

Training of teachers regarding dealing with CWSN in regular classrooms also leads towards inculcating more positive attitude of teachers towards including CWSN in the regular school settings. Research studies have also revealed that often, gender, training of teachers, age, experience of dealing with CWSN, designation and more other demographic variables result in difference in the attitude, efficacy, stress, coping and level of confidence with regards to teaching in inclusive school settings.

Very little/scanty research has been conducted on the discussed variables directly associated with inclusive education. For the improvement, frequent assessments and researches are prerequisite for further development, so the lacunas can be pointed out. Taking the facts into consideration, the researcher initiated to study the teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education in relation to their perceived efficacy, stress coping strategies and level of confidence to teach in inclusive classrooms and bearing of gender,
designations, additional in-service training and presence of CWSN in the classroom on these variables.

1.7 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

TEACHERS’ ATTITUDE TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN RELATION TO THEIR PERCEIVED EFFICACY, STRESS COPING STRATEGIES AND LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE TO TEACH IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

1.8 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

(a) Teachers

For the present study, teachers are those who have been appointed by the government of National Capital Territory of Delhi and performing their jobs as Primary Teacher (PRT), Trained-Graduate Teacher (TGT), & Post-Graduate Teacher (PGT) at different government schools run by the Directorate of Education, Delhi. Those teachers who have been appointed as Special Teacher were excluded from the study.

(b) Attitude

“An attitude is an individual’s viewpoint or disposition towards a particular ‘object’, ‘person’, ‘thing’, ‘idea’ etc.” (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996). Attitudes are considered to have three components: cognitive, effective and behavioral (Eagle & Chaiken, 1993). Teachers’ beliefs or knowledge about educating children with special needs may represent the cognitive component of attitude; teachers’ feelings about educating children with special needs in inclusive classrooms reflects affective component and the teachers’ views on how to act with children with special needs refers to the behavioral (conative) component of attitude. Precisely, for the present study, attitude refers to the teachers’ viewpoints towards teaching children with special needs in inclusive classrooms which consists three components of
overall attitude named ‘Sentiments’ (measures attitude towards person with disabilities), ‘Attitude’ (measures attitude towards inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream classes), and ‘Concern’ (measures personal concerns of teachers towards students with disabilities in their own class). For the same, ‘Sentiments, Attitude and Concerns about Inclusive Education Scale-Revised’, (SACIES-R) developed by Forlin, Earle, Loreman, & Sharma (2011)’ was used to determine the attitude of regular teachers towards inclusive education.

(c) Inclusive Education

Inclusive education describes the process by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering and restructuring its curriculum organization and provisions & allocating resources to enhance equality of education and opportunities for CWSN. Therefore, In India, SSA and RMSA have adopted a more expansive and a broad-based understanding of the concept of inclusion, wherein a multi-option model of educating CWSN is being implemented. The philosophy of Inclusive education is directed towards creating least restricted environment (Barrier free in all respects) for the CWSN in the regular schools where all students can learn together irrespective of any kind of discrimination.

(d) Efficacy

Efficacy is “Belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainment” (Bandura, 1997). For the purpose of present study, efficacy may be operationally defined in terms of teachers’ perceived efficacy to teach in inclusive classrooms by covering three main factors namely ‘Efficacy in using Inclusive Instructions’, ‘Efficacy in Collaboration’, and ‘Efficacy in dealing with Disruptive Behaviour’ of teaching in inclusive classrooms. Teachers’ Efficacy for Inclusive Practices
(TEIP), developed by Sharma, Lorman, & Forlin, (2010) was used as an instrument for measuring teachers’ perceived efficacy to teach in inclusive classrooms.

(e) Stress Coping Strategies

Stress is an imbalance between the demands being made upon an individual and the resources available to help cope with the demands (Esteve, 2000; Troman & Woods, 2001 and Wood & Carthy, 2002). In general, coping is defined as constantly changing cognitive behavioral efforts to manage specific internal and external demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

In the present study, stress coping strategies are those strategies which a teacher perceives and follows to cope up with stress while educating children with special needs in regular classrooms. The strategies were categorized in three facets i.e. ‘Problem Solving Approach’ leading to solve the problems, ‘Avoidance Approach’ leading to avoid the stressed situation and ‘Supportive Approach’ which provide indirect support or strength in tackling the stressed situation. Stress coping strategies was assessed by ‘Perceived Stress Coping Strategies to teach in Inclusive Classroom Scale’ (PSCS-ICS) developed and standardized by the researcher.

Before identifying stress coping strategies, presence of stress among teachers was measured by ‘Perceived Stress among Teachers to teach in Inclusive Classroom Scale’ (PST-ICS) developed and standardized by the researcher. For the purpose, stress was measured under four dimensions directly related to teaching in inclusive classrooms. namely ‘Classroom Environment’ representing environment of the classroom in the presence of students with special needs, ‘Time Availability’ showing the ratio of workload on teacher and available time with special concern to students with special needs in
mainstream classrooms, ‘Demand of CWSN’ consisting special/additional requirements/expectations of students/children with special needs and ‘Environment outside the Classroom’ contained the responsibility of teachers towards Students with Special Needs other than teaching.

(f) **Level of Confidence**

According to Keller (1987), confidence has different components: interest (refers to the attention factors in the environment); relevance (refers to goal-oriented activities); expectancy (refers to one’s own expectation for being successful) and outcomes (refers to the reinforcement value of instruction). In the present study, teachers’ confidence refers to their perceived likelihood of success in teaching in inclusive classrooms for educational purposes and on how far they perceive success as being under his or her control. ‘Perceived Level of Confidence to Teach in Inclusive Classroom Scale’ (PLC-TIC) developed and standardized by the researcher, was used to assay the confidence level of teachers’ to teach in inclusive classrooms under eight factors namely ‘Confidence in Creating Appropriate Environment for CWSN’ (CCAE), ‘Confidence in Understanding Needs of CWSN’ (CUN), ‘Confidence in Teaching-Learning Process’ (CTLP), ‘Confidence in Evaluation’ (CE), ‘Confidence in Preparing IEP’ (CP-IEP), ‘Confidence in Implementing IEP’ (CI-IEP), ‘Confidence in Curriculum Adaptation’ (CCA) and ‘Confidence in Training’ (CT).

(g) **Inclusive Classrooms**

Here, Inclusive classroom refers to the place (class) where all the students are being taught irrespective of any kind of discrimination (specifically discrimination on the basis of disability of the child) by the same teacher.
1.9 OBJECTIVES

For in-depth study of Teachers’ Attitude towards Inclusive Education (dependent variable) and its relationship with three independent variables, researcher generated seven primary objectives and seven subsidiary objectives to comprehend all the variables and their relationship with respect to moderating variables.

1.9.1 Primary Objectives

1. To determine the prevalence of teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education.
2. To assess the prevalence of teachers’ perceived efficacy to teach in inclusive classrooms.
3. To assay the prevalence of teachers’ perceived stress coping strategies to teach in inclusive classrooms.
4. To study the prevalence of teachers’ perceived level of confidence to teach in inclusive classrooms.
5. To analyze the relationship between teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education and their perceived efficacy to teach in inclusive classrooms.
6. To analyze the relationship between teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education and their perceived stress coping strategies to teach in inclusive classrooms.
7. To analyze the relationship between teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education and their perceived level of confidence to teach in inclusive classrooms.

1.9.2 Subsidiary Objectives

8. To measure the prevalence of stress among teachers while teaching in inclusive classrooms.
9. To measure the correlations among teachers’ perceived efficacy, stress, stress coping strategies and level of confidence to teach in inclusive classrooms.
10 To compare the teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education, their perceived efficacy, stress, stress coping strategies and level of confidence to teach in inclusive classrooms with regards to their gender.

11 To compare the teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education, their perceived efficacy, stress, stress coping strategies and level of confidence to teach in inclusive classrooms with regards to additional in-service training.

12 To compare the teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education, their perceived efficacy, stress, stress coping strategies and level of confidence to teach in inclusive classrooms with regards to presence of CWSN in classroom.

13 To compare the teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education, their perceived efficacy, stress, stress coping strategies and level of confidence to teach in inclusive classrooms with regards to their designation.

14 To compare the teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education, their perceived efficacy, stress, stress coping strategies and level of confidence to teach in inclusive classrooms with regards to their age.

1.10 VARIABLES

Variables are the core heart of any of the research. Variable is something that varies and contains various attributes (characteristics and qualities that describe an object). In the present study, three types of variables were taken i.e. dependent variable, independent variable and moderating variable.

(a) Dependent Variable

In the present study, ‘Teachers’ Attitude towards Inclusive Education’ was observed and measured to determine the effect of independent variables on it. It was considered as dependent variables.
(b) **Independent variables**

In the research, the cause variable or the one that identifies forces or conditions that acts on dependent variable is called the independent variable. Following variables were taken as independent variable in the present study.

(i) Teachers’ perceived efficacy to teach in Inclusive classrooms

(ii) Teachers’ perceived stress coping strategies to teach in Inclusive classrooms

(iii) Teachers’ perceived level of confidence to teach in Inclusive classrooms

(c) **Moderating Variables**

A moderating variable is the one that has a strong contingent effect on the independent variable-dependent variable relationship. The presence of the third variable (moderating variable) modifies the original relationship between the independent and dependent variable. The following variables were taken as moderating variables in the present study:

(i) Gender

(ii) Additional in-service training for dealing with CWSN in inclusive classrooms

(iii) Presence of CWSN in classrooms

(iv) Designation

(v) Age

**1.11 DELIMITATIONS**

The study was delimited to:

1. National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi only.

2. a total of 739 general teachers only.
3. A total of 103 Government inclusive schools running under Directorate of Education, National Capital Territory of Delhi only.

Having traced the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study under exploration, the researcher in the next chapter presents review of related literature.