CHAPTER - 8
INCLUSION
8. INCLUSION

Introduction:
The exclusion of Persons With Disabilities in all spheres of life has been discussed constantly through the previous chapters. The disabled community has been fighting for the inclusion of Persons With Disabilities in all aspects of life without exclusion. It is appropriate to understand the concept of discrimination and exclusion before understanding the concept of inclusion since discrimination is the basis for exclusion. Exclusion is the manifestation of discrimination which takes different forms and sheerly keeps Persons With Disabilities away from all spheres of life and at all levels without any basis but disability.

8.1. DISCRIMINATION AND EXCLUSION

A just and equitable social order, or for that matter, the creation of egalitarian societies across the globe will remain a distant dream till the vulnerable and the voiceless, the poor and marginalised segments of society continue to fall prey to the scourge of discrimination and the politics of exclusion that not only perpetuate their poverty and low social status but also aggravate these conditions. Such discrimination/exclusion is a critical component of the intricate processes of impoverishment. It also goes without saying that discrimination engenders exclusion albeit groups and communities remain excluded by reason of insularity as well stemming from their historical and cultural conditioning.

Genesis: The genesis of discrimination can be traced to the following
1. Dominant groups across societies that attained dominant status on account of advantages accruing to them from historical reasons (which cannot be discussed within the ambit of this very brief note) with the result that they came to impose their values and culture on the subjugated groups depriving them, inter alia, of participation at the decision making levels and also of access to and control over resources.
2. Feeling of superiority amongst the dominant groups over the subjugated ones resulting in stratification of society that pushed the subjugated groups to positions of disadvantage and disempowerment.
3. Prejudices getting entrenched; preconceived notions and misgivings about subjugated groups; feeling of patronage and condescension among the dominant groups towards the subjugated ones.

Basis: The following can be identified as the outstanding basis on which groups and individuals are discriminated against;
1. Caste and class: Caste discrimination remains sharpest against the very lowest castes, that is, the so-called untouchable castes (the Scheduled Castes or Dalits). In much of South Asia it would not be incorrect to say that they were agrarian slaves. Against this historical context it is clear that things have changed dramatically. Caste discrimination is apparently declining, particularly due to the increasing political activity of the Scheduled Castes, who are increasingly willing to challenge discrimination. It is clear that with economic growth, economic class is becoming more salient for overall social status; caste identity is perhaps slowly fading in importance while the growth of class identity needs to be further understood. More precisely, caste itself is being transformed. In urban areas, what caste actually means today is rather different from what it meant two decades ago. Caste is far less important in terms of ‘ritual purity’ ranking, and far more important as the unifying factor in new political lobbies and even new political parties.
2. Gender/sex based role stereotypes: Gender discrimination excludes women in South Asia in varying degrees, from a right to life (this is the most extreme case, resulting in female infanticide or foeticide), to equal access to food, education, and equal mobility etc. This, for instance, means that women therefore, have little chance of equal access to jobs, as they are disadvantaged by their comparative lack of education. The reasons for this perhaps go deep and connect with the fundamental Hindu ideas of the dominant upper castes, e.g. the strong social norm that only sons, not daughters, should care for parents in old age. This means that among particular sections of the population there is a strong cultural imperative for parents to invest in sons, not daughters. This is for reasons both material and spiritual: both the parents’ security in old age and in after-life depend on the support of sons. In economic terms, this means that, among these groups, women are socially perceived to be of less value than men, and this has a dramatic impact on their life chances and on the opportunities that are made available to them.

3. Race: Race is the basis of exclusion in many countries in the world. This form of exclusion was common in America and other countries of the world where the numerically large and less in numbers used to exclude other numerically large and less numbered racial people.

4. Ethnicity

5. Political alignment/ opinion

6. Physical, mental or sensory disabilities

Groups that are victims of discrimination/exclusion: Given below is a broad illustrative list (not exhaustive) of groups/individuals that suffer discrimination/exclusion on the basis of social and cultural identity, economic and political status, and physical, mental or sensory disabilities:

- Indigenous people in crisis including that of threat to identity,
- Tribal and Dalit populations,
- Displaced populations,
- People in stigmatised occupations,
- Women,
- Persons living with HIV and AIDS and other stigmatised ailments,
- Persons With Disabilities,
- Children in difficult conditions,
- Minority groups,
- Black people,
- Linguistic minorities,
- Cultural minorities,
- Religious minorities,

Indicators/visible manifestation of discrimination/exclusion: Broadly, the following can be taken as indicators/visible manifestations of discrimination and exclusion;

1. Poor health, education, income and social opportunities
2. Insecurity and poor prospects of improving their situation
3. Weak connections to mainstream formal institutions and little influence on the systems
4. Lack of requisite political will on the part of the state stemming from the anxiety to protect interests of the dominant groups and also from the inability to overcome the dominance of those interests.
5. A state of oppression persistently suffered by the dominated groups.
Implications: Since the work of development agencies is primarily and essentially focused on the poorest and the most marginalised, it behoves every one to recognise that these segments of society are the victims of discrimination and exclusion. Therefore, it is important that engagement with these segments is strengthened, streamlined, consolidated and expanded so that they are taken through processes of conscientization, enabling them to build their capacities and organise themselves to carry forward their struggle characterised by active involvement and informed participation at all levels leading to structural reforms.

It would be in the fitness of things to understand the reasons for the adverse or compelling social and economic outcomes and to comprehend the implications that the surrounding culture has created for those excluded. It is also equally important to take cognisance of the roles that they are to play and the obligations imposed upon them and how the intricate social construct has manipulated them. It is necessary not to lose sight of how the members of the excluded groups have both accepted and rebelled against the way the society has defined them so that it behoves all to get past the definitions and explanations put forth by the dominant - hence the importance of understanding the implicit structure and institutions.

Discrimination/Exclusion vis-à-vis Disability
Ironically, disability related issues have been less discussed and least addressed globally speaking, is no exception to this general rule as far as addressing of disability related issues is concerned with stray exceptions of few countries. It goes without saying that the discrimination, deprivation and denial that Persons With Disabilities continue to suffer from time immemorial are manifested in umpteen ways through barriers of different descriptions, namely, attitudinal, environmental and institutional. Among the population with disabilities, women and children with disabilities and Persons With Disabilities living in rural and relatively difficult-to-access areas suffer the most. It is indeed a matter of shame that in many South Asian countries including India there no dependable, authentic and comprehensive statistics on disability existing that will enable governments to formulate policies and design programmes. With the result, governments as also civil society organisations are content with adopting a casual and cosmetic attitude to this sizeable segment of humanity endowed with immense and infinite potential in contributing to the betterment of humanity, and, unforgettably, this segment of humanity cuts across religion, race, caste, sex, ethnicity, nationality etc. It is indeed a pity that there are statistics available, for example, on the number of species that are on the brink of extinction and yet nothing on this sizeable section of humanity. Although some legislations exist, apparently to protect the rights of Persons With Disabilities in a couple of South Asian countries, including India, but these, experience corroborates, have turned out to be more symbolic and tokenistic rather than instrumental and real in securing justice.

Source:
8.2. INCLUSION VERSUS EXCLUSION

How does it feel to be excluded? When asked to think of a time when some one felt really outside and excluded, what words come to mind? People's immediate reactions are words like: "awful, lonely, scared, sad, mad, unhappy, miserable, depressed, etc." When asked to think of a time when some one felt welcomed, really included what was the feeling? Answers are usually words like: "happy, terrific, loved, great, wonderful, important, thrilled, warm, healthy, etc. These responses are universal. The answers are the same for children of all ages, people of all countries, old and young, male and female. When people are included, they feel welcome; they feel good; they feel healthy. Inclusion is the precondition for learning, happiness - for healthy living. Exclusion is the precondition for misery, loneliness and strife. Belongingness is not incidental - it is primary to existence. Thus, Exclusion kills - physically and/or spiritually. "Killing the pain" of Exclusion is a learned skill. Adults often choose a "living death" by numbing the pain with alcohol, drugs, and obsessions - to "override" the anguish of Exclusion.

Inclusion is the foundation of the house. It is not a guarantee, but rather a precondition for the growth and development of full and healthy human beings. "Included" - as defined in the Random House College Dictionary is an adjective, meaning "contained in; embraced". In Roget's Thesaurus (4th Edition) - inclusive of - means "with". Inclusion cuts directly to the core of human values and beliefs.

The unstated underlying assumptions of exclusion are, among others, that:

- Every one is not equal in capacity or value.
- It is not feasible to give equal opportunity.
- Elite must be chosen and trained who can take care of the rest.
- Every one will benefit through the trickle-down theory.

Inclusion is the opposite and works from opposite assumptions:

- Every one is unique in value; however, each has unique capacity.
- All people can learn and have contributions to make.
- All have a responsibility and an opportunity to give every person the chance to make a contribution.

The criterion for inclusion is breathing, not IQ, income, colour, race, sex or language. It is unethical, politically unacceptable and repugnant to write off marginalised people in the society. In short, exclusion does not work.

Why is someone excluded?
If the general thought is that inclusion makes people feel good, then why wouldn't it be for everyone? The fact is that people are excluded for all sorts of reasons. Perhaps the hinge issue is not why people are excluded, but the culture of exclusion itself. What lies at its core? Could it be a motivation driven by a spirit of superiority and control, selfishness and indifference, greed and fear? Or is it about maintaining power and control of one's own group over another? Exclusion breeds homogeneity. People have less and less time for all things heterogeneous; be they culture, race, caste, religion, class, sex, sexuality, intelligence or abilities. Often it is assumed that all Persons With Disabilities are a homogenous group. The fact of the matter is that Persons With Disabilities differ in the type of disability they have, be it sensory, physical or mental. They also differ in age depending on when the disability was
acquired. More importantly people with disability differ in their ability to work and contribute to society.

**Discrimination:**

When other people or groups are judged without reason or knowledge, it often leads to unfair discrimination. Prejudice and discrimination are created by many factors, some of which cause more extensive and deep-rooted damage than others. Often, prejudice is easily erased unless originally prompted by a traumatic experience. Some factors that strengthen prejudice are fear, guilt, shame, politeness and moralising. In Freudian theory, prejudice has an "aim" and an "object." The object of prejudice is people identified as inferior in one's own culture, while "the aim of prejudicial behaviour and attitudes is to discharge feelings of rage, which stem from internalised experiences of hurt". In other words, we discriminate against others because we ourselves feel powerless and inadequate.

**Why discrimination matters?**

Discrimination is often difficult to prove, particularly when it is not expressed in specific legislation or when there is a lack in commitment among dominant groups to recognize the problem. For this the visible manifestations of discrimination need to be looked at. One of the most visible forms of discrimination is reflected in the fact that indigenous people, dalits, Persons With Disability, women and older people constitute a disproportionately large and persistent percentage of the poor, both in developing and industrialised countries. Another visible form of discrimination relates to the exclusion of minorities, dalits, indigenous people, Persons With Disability and women from key social, political and economic institutions. Although it may be difficult to establish that poverty and exclusion are caused by discrimination, the fact that poverty and other forms of exclusion are more persistent among the marginalised groups is indicative that discrimination may be a contributing factor. Although establishing the case that exclusion arises from discrimination is difficult, due, in large part to severe data limitations. But there is enough evidence to suggest that discrimination is a strong contributing factor to exclusion of minorities, indigenous peoples, people with disability etc. in many cases. This has serious implications for development policy aimed at reducing poverty and inequality. Discrimination on the basis of, being disabled, belonging to an ethnic, religious or linguistic group should be examined in order to strengthen policy strategies for overcoming economic exclusion. Inclusion is not about placing a child with a disability in a classroom or a school. That is only a tiny piece of the puzzle. Rather, it is about how diversity, difference, mortality are dealt with. Inclusion does not mean every one is same. It does not mean all agree. Rather, inclusion celebrates the diversity and differences with respect and gratitude. The greater the diversity, the richer one's capacity to create new visions. Inclusion is an antidote to racism and sexism because it welcomes these differences, and celebrates them as capacities rather than deficiencies. Inclusion is a farce when it only means "white, bright and middle class." Inclusion means all - together - supporting one another.

A child or adult with a disability is a symbolic personal crucible where feelings about differences are faced head on. Inclusion is about how people who look, act or think differently than so called "ordinary" people are looked on. Inclusion can be deeply disturbing for it challenges the unexamined notions of what "ordinary" and "normal" really mean. The hidden values are paraded before all in action and reaction. Some of what is seen is discomfiting. The questions become very personal. How would any one feel if they were unable to walk, talk or move? How would any one feel if they had a child who was labelled? How would they feel about themselves? How would some one feel if they were disabled by an accident? And
ultimately, the one common issue every one faces (or denies). How would they feel about growing older? Where will they live? With whom will they associate? Will people (their family and friends) care for them when they need help, or will they cast them aside? Will some one live an endless life waiting hopelessly, helplessly, uselessly in a nursing home ward for death? What will become of them when they are old? Inclusion instigates this kind of reflection. No wonder people react! Reflection is vital to everyone. Life must be examined to be lived fully. It may be painful, but the inquiry can be the beginning of building new personal futures. Humanity owes a debt of gratitude to people who present with this magnitude of challenge. Thus, welcoming people with challenging differences into regular schools and communities is not simply for their benefit, it is for our health and survival.

The need to belong - Inclusion isn't a new program or something one "does" to or for someone else. It is a deeply rooted spiritual concept that one lives. It is not a trendy product or fad to be discarded. It is not a new label - "the inclusion kids". It is not a bandwagon. People are either included or excluded. One cannot be a little bit pregnant or a little bit included. One is either "in" or "out". One either belongs or doesn't belong. If people are excluded, they are being programmed for the fight of their lives - to get in and to belong.

Many suggest that with the society in crisis, one needs to mount the barricades and defend the turf. Typical responses include: hire more police, build more jails, create more special education, administer more electro-shock, and issue more behaviour modifying drugs. Control, control, control! But there is another possibility. One could strive to welcome and include everyone, to build a society with more acceptance, more love, more care, and more compassion.

Source:
2. www.inclusion.com
3. www.minorityrights.org
8.3. INCLUSION

What is Inclusion?
Inclusion is about every one.
Inclusion is about living full lives - about learning to live together.
Inclusion makes the world a classroom for a full life.
Inclusion treasures diversity and builds community.
Inclusion is about the 'abilities' - the gifts and how to share them.
Inclusion is not just a 'disability' issue.

In 1955 the story of a brave and tired woman named Rosa Parks was put in front of the country's awareness. They say this woman had gotten tired, in fact, historically tired of being denied equality. She wanted to be included in society in a full way, something which was denied people labelled as "black" people! So Rosa Parks sat down on a bus in a section reserved for "white" people. When Rosa was told to go to "her place" at the back of the bus, she refused to move, was arrested, and history was challenged and changed. All of this happened because Rosa Parks was tired, historically tired of being excluded. She had sat down and thereby stood up for inclusion! Another powerful cry for "inclusion" is being heard today. This new cry is being raised by people with unrecognised abilities, (the so-called "disabled"). Many people whose abilities are regularly denied or ignored feel that society is not honouring the right to participate in society in a full way. Part of the call is for better accessibility, such as more wheelchair ramps, more signs and materials in Braille, community living, etc. The Americans with Disabilities Act represents an attempt to hear the "inclusion" cry. However, much more needs to be done including a search for an acceptable definition and practice of inclusion. Across the country a definition of inclusion is offered. It is generally accepted that "Inclusion" means inviting those who have been historically locked out to "come in". This well-intentioned meaning must be strengthened. A weakness of this definition is evident. Who has the authority or right to "invite" others in? And how did the "inviters" get in? Finally, who is doing the excluding?

It is time to both recognise and accept that everyone is born "in"! No one has the right to invite others in! It definitely becomes everyone's responsibility as a society to remove all barriers which uphold exclusion since no one has the authority to "invite" others "in"! So what is inclusion? Inclusion is recognising the universal "oneness" and interdependence. Inclusion is recognising that every body is "one" even though no body is the "same". The act of inclusion means fighting against exclusion and all of the social diseases exclusion gives birth to - i.e. racism, sexism, handicapism, etc. Fighting for inclusion also involves assuring that all support systems are available to those who need such support. Providing and maintaining support system is a civic responsibility, not a favour. Every body is born "in". Society will immediately improve at the point when this truth is honoured!!

Inclusion: It's About Change!
Inclusion means change!! It is believed that both inclusion and change are inevitable. Whether one chooses to grow with and from these changes is a choice. It has been instructive to be a participant in hundreds of emotional meetings about "inclusion", when it is crystal clear after a few minutes that inclusion is only nominally the topic. The real topic (seldom stated) is Fear of Change! Many people in education and human services are afraid they will lose their jobs; afraid of new responsibilities; afraid of what they don't understand; afraid of being accountable. The words that come out are: "But, we don't have enough money! But, we haven't been trained to take care of those! But, I didn't choose Special Ed! But, I don't have special curriculum guidelines and I don't have time to create a special program for "them". The other children will suffer!" All these phrases are well recognised.
Listen deeper. Most of the "butts" are about "me" "I". The butts that are couched in deprivation to the other children reflect both ignorance of virtually everything that is known (for centuries) about cooperative learning and peer tutoring, and too often are a guise to cover "I don't want to risk giving up control!" "I am afraid that people might find out that I don't know everything! I don't want to do this." "I am Afraid!" This is the key phrase underneath most of the kvetching and whining. But for many, there are deeper fears that are teased out with great delicacy. People are afraid of being "faced" with their own mortality, with imperfection. People are afraid 'they might catch it'. These deep seated fears are a product of the culture. It is not the fault of individuals (teachers and human service workers) that they are afraid. Every one was taught to 'put "them" out of sight' and as citizens and taxpayers they have. But, now every body knows that 'putting people away' is a decision just one step away from extermination. The film, 'Schindler's List' reminds us that segregation in any ghetto is life threatening. The answer is that one must Face the Fear, and Do It Anyway i.e. include everyone. This will be uncomfortable - even terrifying for a few moments, but fears pass. When the fears are faced, and proceed regardless, they immediately diminish and come into perspective.

Inclusion is about change. Change is terrifying - for every one. Human bodies are designed to seek "homeostasis" - equilibrium. Change upsets. It's scary. It's unpredictable. But since the issue is one of survival - about the Human Rights of individuals, it has to be done anyway. No one has the right to exclude anyone. The fears are simply an obstacle to be overcome. They cannot and must not be a reason to deny any person their rights.

A second learning is that people need support to get through the crisis period of change. The fascinating facts are however, that this has very little to do with budgets. The key ingredient in effective support of change is supportive relationships. What is needed is to 'practice random kindness and senseless acts of beauty' - a kind word - a thoughtful gesture. It is knowing someone will be there when you need them. Recently, the American Federation of Teachers launched an attack on inclusion - a tragic and misguided assault. They have identified support as essential for effective inclusion and find "dumping" practices abhorrent. It is totally agreeable. But the enemy of lack of support in schools, training and beyond is not innocent children or the issue of inclusion. The villains are faceless policy makers who continue to slash at the support structures that enable and encourage teachers and others to go the extra mile. If some educators cannot come to terms with including everyone, it may be time for them to move on to other jobs. It is entirely legitimate to provide job security - but not security against change. People who cannot support rights for all have the right to their own personal opinion but not the right to stand in the way of the rights of other citizens. Inclusion is purely and simply about Change. It is frightening - and exciting. The rewards are many. It will be and is hard and often emotionally draining work. Erik Olesen in his book "12 Steps to Mastering the Winds of Change" says, "The mediocre resist change, the successful embrace it." One must invite success for inclusion and thus embrace change with all hearts and souls. Strong teams to support one another must be built. Wasting time worrying about the "kids" must be stopped when what the need is to develop a creative design teams that meet every problem with the same spirit found in the corporate sector. The lines from people who sell hamburgers, running shoes and hotel rooms use the slogans: DO WHAT IT TAKES! JUST DO IT! and YES, WE CAN! These are messages one can borrow and adopt for their own work!! Finally it helps to remember that "An injury to one is an injury to all!" and in the case of inclusion, "The benefit to one will be the benefit of all."

The Ethics of Inclusion: Three Common Delusions

This is a sincere and serious attempt to begin a dialogue on the expectations about personal behaviour that go along with a commitment to Inclusion. Unattainable expectations confuse good people and fragment efforts for change into factions organised around hurt feelings.
Those who care about Inclusion can reduce this drain on the energy necessary to work for justice by being clear about three delusions which are common, but mostly unconscious among advocates for Inclusion. When the false and destructive beliefs are replaced with simpler expectations of decency and working constructively in common, it will be better able to live out the real meaning of Inclusion by honouring and growing from the shared struggle with diverse gifts, differences, and weaknesses. There is dilemma whether to use "delusion" or "illusion". Delusion means "a mistaken idea or belief"; Illusion a 'false appearance or deceptive impression of reality". They are synonyms - but "delusion" is chosen because it is stronger.

Delusion 1

Inclusion means that everybody must love everybody else or "We must all be one big, happy family!" (OBHF) This delusion is at work when people who care about Inclusion feel shocked and offended to discover that other Inclusion advocates don't really like one another. Sometimes this delusion pushes people into pretending, or wanting others to pretend, that real differences of opinion and personality don't exist or don't really matter. The roots of this delusion may be in a desire to make up for painful experiences by finally becoming part of "one big happy family," (OBHF) where there is continual harmony and peace. The "one big happy family" (OBHF) delusion is the exact opposite of Inclusion. The real challenge of Inclusion is to find common cause for important work that cannot be done effectively in isolation from others along the many differences of race, culture, nationality, gender, class, ability, and personality that truly do divide. Educating children is one such common task. The reward of Inclusion comes in the harvest of creative action and new understanding that follows the hard work of finding common ground and tilling it by confronting and finding creative ways through real differences. The "one big happy family" (OBHF) delusion destroys the possibilities for Inclusion in a complex community by seducing people into burying differences by denying their significance or even their existence. People in schools or agencies or associations which promote this delusion lose vividness and energy because they have to swallow the feelings of dislike and conflict they experience and deny the differences they see and hear. Denial makes a sandy foundation for inclusive schools and communities. Community grows when people honour a commitment to laugh, shout, cry, argue, sing, and scream with, and at, one another without destroying one another or the earth in the process. Diversity cannot be celebrated honestly if one pretends to bring in the harvest before tilling the ground together.

Delusion 2

Inclusion means everyone must always be happy and satisfied or "Inclusion cures all ills." A group of good people came together to study inclusive community in an intensive course. One person, Anne, angrily announced her dissatisfaction from the group's first meeting on. She acted hostile to everyone else and to the group's common project. At first, the group organised itself around Anne's dissatisfaction. A number of members anguished over her participation. It was hard for the group to sustain attention on anything for very long before the topic of how to satisfy Anne took over. The group acted as if it could not include Anne unless she was happy. And, they assumed, if they could not be an inclusive group (i.e. make Anne happy) they would be failing to live up to their values. Two other members dropped out of the group, frustrated by their inability to overcome the power of this delusion and move on to issues of concern to them. The group broke through when they recognised that true community includes people who are angry and anguished as well as those who are happy and satisfied. After overcoming the delusion of cure, the group gave Anne room to be angry and dissatisfied without being the focus of the whole group. Let out of the centre of the
group's concern, Anne found solidarity with several other members, whom she chose as a support circle for herself. In this circle of support her real pain emerged as she told her story of being an abused child and a beaten wife. She did not go home cured or happy, but she did find real support and direction for dealing with the issues in her life.

The delusion that Inclusion equals happiness leads to its opposite: a pseudo-community in which people who are disagreeable or suffering have no place unless the group has the magic to cure them. Groups trapped in this delusion hold up a false kind of status difference that values people who act happy more than people who suffer. This delusion creates disappointment that Inclusion is not the panacea. Real community members get over the wish for a cure-all and look for ways to focus on promoting one another's gifts and capacities in the service of justice. They support, and often must endure, one another's weaknesses by learning ways to forgive, to reconcile, and to rediscover shared purpose. Out of this hard work comes a measure of healing.

**Delusion 3**

Inclusion is the same as friendship or "We are really all the same" Friendship grows mysteriously between people as a mutual gift. It shouldn't be assumed and it can't be legislated. But people can choose to work for inclusive schools and communities, and schools and agencies and associations can carefully build up norms and customs that communicate the expectation that people will work hard to recognise, honour, and find common cause for action in their differences. This hard work includes embracing dissent and disagreement and sometimes even outright dislike of one person for another. The question at the root of Inclusion is not "Can't we be friends?" but, in Rodney King's hard own words, "Can we all just learn to get along - to live with one another?" It is difficult to get along as long as others who are different are simply avoided and those with whom there is a comfortable and similar feeling are included. Once the difference is openly recognised, one can begin to look for something worth working together to do. Once people begin to work together, conflicts and difficulties will teach more about the differences. If they can be faced and explored the actions and mutual understanding will be enriched and strengthened. To carry out this work, the standard must be stronger than the friendly feelings that come from being with someone who is alike and likes. To understand and grow through including difference one must risk the comfortable feeling of being just like each other. The question that can guide in the search for better understanding through shared action is not "Do people like each other?" but "Can they live with each other?" One can discover things worth the joint effort even if people seem strange to one another, even if they dislike one another, and it is through this working together that every one can learn to get along.

The delusion of sameness leads away from the values of Inclusion. It blurs differences and covers over discomfort and the sense of strangeness or even threat that goes with confronting actual human differences. Strangely, it is only when the assumption of friendship fades away that the space opens up for friendship to flower. An ethic of decency and common labor, Inclusion doesn't call on people to live in a fairy tale. It doesn't require that every one begins with a new kind of human being who is always friendly, unselfish, and unafraid and never dislikes or feels strange with anyone. One can start with who they are. And it doesn't call for some kind of super group that can make everyone happy, satisfied, and healed. It can and must be started with the schools, and agencies, and associations that are there now. The way to Inclusion calls for more modest, and probably more difficult, virtues. One must simply be willing to learn to get along while recognising the differences, faults and foibles, and the gifts.
This begins with a commitment to decency; a commitment not to behave in ways that demean others and an openness to notice and change when the behaviour is demeaning, even when this is unintentional. This ethical boundary - upheld as a standard in human rights tribunals around the globe - defines the social space within which the work of Inclusion can go on. This work calls on each and every one to discover and contribute their gifts through a common labor of building worthy means to create justice for people and for the earth through the ways they educate each other, through the ways they care for one another's health and welfare, and through the ways they produce the things required to live good lives together. In this common labor different kinds of people will be found; people that are loved and people that are disliked; friends and people that one can barely stand. Sometimes the human strengths will be astonishing and some times the weaknesses will be over powering. Through this work of Inclusion every one will, haltingly, become new people capable of building new and more human communities.

Source:
8.4 POTENTIAL BARRIERS TO INCLUSION

The potential barriers that prevent or hinder Persons With Disabilities to do the following have been continuously discussed.

- Participate in spheres of socio, economic, political, cultural, religious and other aspects of life with their so called non-disabled fellow citizens as equal members and citizens of that community, society and nation
- Contribute to the development of self, family, community, society, nation and world.
- Secure, realise, and exercise their rights and duties to a life of dignity.
- Realise their personal goals, dreams, aspirations and ambitions to a life of dignity.

The potential barriers can be broadly classified into seven categories:

A. Attitudinal barriers: The negative and crippling attitudes of the larger community towards Persons With Disabilities make them more vulnerable. It reinforces the impoverishment and their invisibility due to these stereotypes. These attitudes are reinforced by myths and misconceptions. These myths and misconceptions are deep rooted in the minds of larger community. The conditioning of the community always views them as helpless, objects of charity and pity, dependent, beggars, weak, disadvantaged, under privileged, inferior and pitiful. These stereotypes and crippling and negative attitudes never give them a chance to prove their ability and make them more dependent. Negative attitudes can be seen in the forms of sympathy, apathy, antipathy, negligence, over protection, pity, charity, compassion and elimination. These attitudinal barriers can also be due to ignorance. Community or society is ignorant to the issues of Persons With Disabilities which never give them a chance to understand the feelings of Persons With Disabilities. Negative and crippling attitudes are manifested in the forms of discrimination, exclusion, charity, feelings of inferiority and superiority, deprivation of opportunities and differential treatment.

B. Institutional barriers: Institutional barriers refer to the policies, procedures, legislations, norms, rules, regulations, schemes, programmes, laws, processes and other written or unwritten constitutional framework of the local, regional, national and international levels which exclude Persons With Disabilities and create barriers for Persons With Disabilities to access the services of those institutions, schemes, programmes, policies, legislations and laws as an equal citizen of that society. These institutional barriers not only keep them away but also do not protect the human rights of this underprivileged section. In the first instance these institutions are inaccessible; secondly the policies and procedures exclude Persons With Disabilities. One of the biggest disadvantages is that information about these procedures is not accessible to Persons With Disabilities. Anti expression and absence of expression of disability make these institutional frameworks anti-disabled and a potential barrier to Persons With Disabilities.

C. Physical or environmental barriers: Physical or environmental barriers refer to those structural and functional barriers of buildings, roads, transport facilities, open places like parks, stadiums, play grounds, religious places, recreational places, legal places, state and union legislatures and other natural or human made structures which prevent Persons With Disabilities to access services of these structures and enter into them. Access to information is a fundamental issue for Persons With Disabilities. The existing information is inaccessible since it is not in accessible form. Auditory signals at public places are inaccessible to persons with hearing impairment. Visual signages and signals are inaccessible to persons with visual impairment. The information existing in the form of print is inaccessible to persons
with visual impairment. Access refers to reaching buildings, structures, places, information, services and other opportunities in society.

D. Legal barriers: Legal barriers can be broadly classified into four categories. They are:

1. **Anti disabled legislations, laws, policies and orders**: Almost all legislations, laws, policies and orders are anti-disabled in nature. The expressions used in these legislations are anti disabled and do not protect the interests and human rights of Persons With Disabilities, rather they exclude Persons With Disabilities. Some of the anti disabled legislations and policies are the Manifestos of the major political parties of India 2004 and mention/speak about creating livelihood opportunities only to abled citizens of this country. The expression used in the manifesto is that creation of livelihood opportunities to millions of “abled” citizens of this country. The common minimum programme of United Progress Alliance, Government of India 2004 speaks the same thing. It does not include Persons With Disabilities in the livelihood programme. The draft bill on Employment Guarantee Act does not include Persons With Disabilities for livelihood opportunities. Medical Termination of pregnancy Act of 1972 permits the couple to terminate the foetus with disability which is again anti disabled.

2. **Absence of word “disability” in the general legislations, laws, policies and orders**: Almost all policies and laws exclude Persons With Disabilities. The non-discriminatory provision of most of the national and international human rights instruments and legislations do not have the expression “disability” in it but have expression like gender, race, caste, class, colour, creed and any other ground. The international human rights instruments do not speak about Persons With Disabilities at all. The instrument includes the universal declaration of human rights; child rights convention, convention on minority rights and other treaties, conventions, international laws, legislations but none of them have an expression called “disability”. The constitution of India in its anti-discrimination legislation excludes Persons With Disabilities. The legislation enacted for the protection of under privileged sections of India does not speak about disability at all. The judiciary is uninformed about the application of general laws, legislations and policies for the protection of Persons With Disabilities who are also citizens of the country. Every time the judiciary seeks special legislations and laws to protect and safeguard the interest of Persons With Disabilities by ignoring the fact that the law of the land is equally applicable to Persons With Disabilities to protect their rights.

3. **Non existence of legal protection measures**: There should be special legislations and laws or provisions within the general laws to safeguard the interests of Persons With Disabilities but the fact of the matter is that there are no special legislations and laws covering all aspects. There are a few special laws and legislations but they are not comprehensive enough to protect the interest of Persons With Disabilities in all aspects of socio, economic, political, cultural and religious life. The aspects include right to inheritance, marriage, divorce, recreation, companionship, access and other spheres.

4. **Poor lack/no implementation of legislations, laws, policies and orders**: There are a couple of legislations, laws, policies and orders exclusively enacted for the development of Persons With Disabilities but they are not implemented in letter and spirit. If even 10% of the provisions enshrined in the legislations are implemented, millions of Persons With Disabilities will be benefited and their life will be changed. The lack of political will to promote and protect the interests and human rights of Persons With Disabilities on the part of political parties and Government has led to this pathetic situation.

8. INCLUSION
E. Cultural barriers: It has been discussed in the previous section that religious values and beliefs are the root cause of negative attitudes and discrimination against Persons With Disabilities. These negative attitudes, discrimination, exclusion, stereotypes and prejudices are reinforced by strong myths, misconceptions, blind beliefs, superstition and ignorance. Since these negative attitudes, prejudices and stereotypes have their roots in ancient religious values; it is very difficult to change them. Manu’s expression that disability is due to the sin of wrong doing in a previous birth; losing righteousness due to the presence of a Person With Disability in religious rituals, the theory of glorification of race, exclusion of persons affected by leprosy and restrictions on them from entering the main village as depicted in the old testament in the Bible are some of the explanations of the cultural barriers which prevent or hinder the development of Persons With Disabilities as an equal member of that society.

F. Economic barriers: The so called mainstream livelihood opportunities exclude Persons With Disabilities. When the question of livelihood options arise suddenly people think about stereotype livelihood options like chair recanning, telephone booths, candle-making, agarbathi making, greeting card making, file making, music and other occupations which are enlisted for Persons With Disabilities. Society never thinks beyond these stereotyped occupations. But actually Persons With Disabilities could be engaged in all types of meaningful and gainful occupations depending upon the type of disability, degree of disability, and the interest and aptitude of the person. But society is absolutely unaware about this fact. Persons With Disabilities have established this fact by efficiently managing various occupations. The fact of the matter is that the one which is not possible for some one is possible for others. Thus enlisting or branding some stereo type occupations is a potential barrier to engage in a meaningful and gainful occupation which gives him/her a sense of job satisfaction. The work force of this country consists of less than 1% of Persons With Disabilities in comparison to 6% in Germany, 3% in UK, 1.9% in Japan and 1% in Bangladesh. The further break up of this less than 1% is 0.5% in public sector, 0.4% in private sector and 0.002% in multi national companies. The reasons for this discrimination are inaccessible work places, negative attitudes of the employer, excluded by HR policies, lack of opportunities for vocational training, lack of opportunities for higher education, lack of opportunities to get elementary or basic education and prejudices against Persons With Disabilities. This blatant discrimination and exclusion has forced them to be engaged in undignified occupations like begging. Economic empowerment of Persons With Disabilities equips them with a sense of self confidence, respect, worth, dignity, esteem and makes them contributing members of the society. Almost all NGOs, projects, Government departments and national and international agencies working with people with disabilities just ignore this part of crucial and critical component of rehabilitation and end up providing medical rehabilitation services like certificates, surgery, medication, assistive devices and therapeutic services.

G. Political barriers: The political barriers include decision making in family, village, community, society and other decision making bodies, voting, contesting elections, representation in decision making bodies in community and society, political parties, manifestos of political parties, common minimum programmes of political parties and democratic institutions of this country. The constitution of this country provides reservation to other backward sections to represent in decision making bodies in order to address their issues. The constituencies have been reserved for other backward sections in the legislature of both union and states. Reservation is also provided in Panchayat Raj institutions, town and city municipal corporations. But there is no such provision of privileges for Persons With Disabilities. The main reason for this blatant discrimination and exclusion is that they do not constitute a sizable chunk of the vote bank to attract political parties since they are scattered.
across the country. The polling stations are often not accessible to Persons With Disabilities and the people sitting there are not sensitive enough to the needs of Persons With Disabilities and are rather indifferent and insulting.

H. Religious barriers: It has been discussed that negative attitudes, discrimination, exclusion and prejudices against Persons With Disabilities have their roots in values and belief system. The values and belief systems are influenced by the religious values. The crippling attitudes and stereotypes are derived from the religious texts and scriptures. The religious texts and scriptures view people with disabilities as objects of charity and pity. Disability has been seen as Karma [bad deeds of previous birth] and curse of God for retribution; thus there is no prominent place for Persons With Disabilities in religious ceremonies. The places of worship such as Church, Mosque, Temple, Gurudwara, Basadi and Vihara are not accessible to Persons With Disabilities. People with assistive devices like callipers are not allowed into places of worship on the pretext of sanctity or sacredness. Religious rituals exclude Persons With Disabilities. They are not allowed to take part in these rituals for the simple reason that the righteousness will be lost due to presence of Persons With Disabilities. They have no opportunity to perform these rituals. Many religious and cultural taboos are imposed on them. The religious texts or scriptures are not accessible to Persons With Disabilities since they are in ink print.

Source:
8.5 AVENUES OF INCLUSION

The earlier sections of this chapter provide a base for discussion on discrimination, exclusion and social inclusion. The concept of inclusion is very broad and wide. There is no such thing as inclusion in the society or community. The entire world needs to include Persons With Disabilities in all avenues of life. Since the concept of inclusion is subjective and psychological, it is a very tough task to enlist the avenues for inclusion. It may be ethically wrong to list the avenues of inclusion since the concept of inclusion is very wide, diverse, varied and subjective. Secondly the concept of society is also an abstract concept and may vary from community to community depending upon the culture of the given community. This is a sincere attempt to draw everyone’s attention to the avenues of exclusion which will help to understand the magnitude of exclusion and thus efforts can be made to include Persons With Disabilities in all spheres, aspects, arenas, milieu and areas of life without discrimination and exclusion. This list is only illustrative and not exhaustive. This is an earnest attempt to initiate reflection about avenues of inclusion depending upon various factors.

1. Attitudes: The crippling, negative, and limiting attitudes of the society have excluded Persons With Disabilities. There is a great need to change societal attitudes in order to include Persons With Disabilities. Society should have the correct, positive and appropriate attitude towards Persons With Disabilities so that they have a place in the mind of people. The right attitudes include accepting the diversity, uniqueness, abilities, disabilities, changes and new values, non-discriminatory, non-judgemental, loving, respecting unique abilities, empathising with fellow beings, accepting them as equal fellow beings, mutual trust and care, mutual help, understanding the concept of interdependency, opportunities to thrive and admiration for struggle and achievement.

2. Constitution: Persons With Disabilities have been excluded from the constitutions of national and international decision making bodies. There is no word “disability” in these constitutions. There is a great need to include the word "disability" wherever possible in the constitutions of UNO and its organs, agencies, projects, programmes and other subsidiary bodies. Persons With Disabilities should be included in the constitutions of all the countries including India. There should be a place for Persons With Disabilities in the constitutions of registered societies, trusts, companies, associations, academies, corporations, organisations, institutions, councils, commissions, groups, clubs, development authorities, Government departments, boards and other decision making bodies.

3. Policy: Any policies of the international community, agencies, treaties, declarations, covenants, conventions and programmes must be inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. Policies of the country, states, ministries, departments, Government orders, tribunals, courts and other appropriate policies must be inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. International development agencies, charitable companies, NGOs, non-profit organisations, groups and associations must evolve an inclusive policy which is pro-disabled and disabled friendly. Policies of educational institutions, vocational institutions, banks, cooperative societies, business co-operatives, universities, management institutions and other appropriate Government and private organisations and institutions must be inclusive of Persons With Disabilities.

4. Programmes and schemes: All the schemes and programmes of UN and its agencies, country, state, national and international development agencies, national and international NGOs, charitable institutions, which aim at eradication of poverty and integrated
development must be inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. They must be one of the target groups within their programmes and schemes.

5. Decision making bodies: Decision making bodies such as UNO and its agencies, Legislatures like Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, state legislatures like Vidhan Sabha and Vidhan Parishad, Panchayat Raj institutions, town and city municipal corporations, councils, boards, syndicates, authorities, working committees, commissions, national and international development agencies, disability and development organisations, NGOs, CBOs, charitable institutions and other decision making bodies must be inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. There should be representatives of Persons With Disabilities in the decision making bodies to represent the issues pertaining to disability and development.

6. Transport system: The public transport such as air, road, rail and water transport must be accessible and inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. All the public transport vehicles and mode of transport must be designed in such a manner that Persons With Disabilities could have easy access and use without any difficulty. Local transports like bus, train, car, matador, maxi-cab, flight, ships must be accessible and usable to Persons With Disabilities without any problems. Persons With Disabilities should be taken into account while designing and manufacturing these systems.

7. Buildings and public places: All the buildings of all offices and other public places must be accessible and inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. Office buildings of Government, Corporate sector, development sector, sports, business, banks, bilateral, multilateral and unilateral and MNCs must be accessible and inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. Public places like bus stands, railway stations, airports, harbours and other public places must be inclusive of Persons With Disabilities.

8. Recreation: Recreation must be inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. All categories of Persons With Disabilities could follow and enjoy recreation. Recreational places like theatres, cinema halls, auditoriums, parks, stadiums, indoor and outdoor play grounds, video centres, the circus and other forms of recreational places must be accessible and inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. Recreational places must be designed in such a manner that all can enjoy it without any barriers.

9. Education: Education from pre-school to higher education like medical, engineering, law, post graduate and doctoral research must be inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. Educational institutions must be accessible and inclusive, curriculum, methodology, evaluation system and grading must be inclusive and accessible to Persons With Disabilities. The entire curriculum must include topics of Persons With Disabilities and accessible to them in appropriate forms. Buildings of educational institutions must be accessible and inclusive of Persons With Disabilities so that they can access educational opportunities easily. All the competitive examinations must be disabled friendly and accessible.

10. Health services: All the health services like primary, secondary and tertiary health care systems must be accessible and inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. Basic or primary rehabilitation must be the integral component of all the health services at all levels.

11. Information: All the information must be in accessible form so that all categories of Persons With Disabilities could access the appropriate information without any difficulty. The information of international and national concern, development, Government departments, educational opportunities, livelihood opportunities, recreation, sports, programmes, schemes.
services, daily use must be accessible and inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. It should be in appropriate and accessible forms to Persons With Disabilities.

12. Politics: The political process of a country or international agency must be inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. There should be sufficient representation from Persons With Disabilities in the decision making bodies of all the political parties. The manifesto of the political party must be inclusive of Persons With Disabilities and their issues. Voting machines and polling booths must be accessible and inclusive. There should be sufficient representatives of the disabled community in the candidates who contest for elections. The nominated posts must be inclusive. Election campaigns must be inclusive of Persons With Disabilities in terms of their participation and discussion of the issues affecting the lives of millions of Persons With Disabilities.

13. Religion: All religions must be inclusive and accessible to Persons With Disabilities. All the religious places and places of worship must be accessible to Persons With Disabilities. All the rituals must include them in terms of participation and officiating in the same. All the religious texts must be accessible and inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. Religious values and beliefs must not reinforce myths, misconceptions, superstitions and blind beliefs which attribute disempowerment and seclusion of Persons With Disabilities. They must have opportunities to officiate, participate, preach, profess, propagate, embrace and accept any religion and religious rituals without any discrimination and exclusion.

14. Livelihoods: All the livelihood opportunities must be accessible and inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. Vocational courses, training centres, work places, industries and other livelihood options must be accessible and inclusive of Persons With Disabilities. There should be opportunities for Persons With Disabilities to take up or engage in any meaningful and gainful occupations according to their interest and aptitude without any discrimination and exclusion. All the legislations, policies, schemes, programmes, notifications and other relevant enactments must be accessible and inclusive.

15. Suggestions/Possible lines of action: Community/society, world, national and international community should work towards creating conditions of equality and dignity for Persons With Disabilities - and, it should have a well defined and properly conceived strategy on disability at the global, regional and national levels. The ensuing Global Strategy Paper (GSP) should ensure that disability issues do find mention in the strategic objectives and in the core values of human society, incorporating therein a respect for difference and acceptance of disability as part of human diversity and humanity.

It is also important to include and cover Persons With Disabilities in all the programmes and interventions – and, there needs to be an express mandate to that effect. It would also be useful to do the following.

(a) Identify policies, programmes, practices and laws that perpetuate and/or create barriers for Persons With Disabilities rather than remove them.

(b) Examine the status of accessibility of government schemes/programmes by Persons With Disabilities and draw up strategies accordingly.

(c) Examine the status of inclusion of Persons With Disabilities in the programmes implemented by the civil society organisations and lobby with them for their inclusion.

(d) Identify laws, rules and regulations, which require enabling provisions but do not have such provisions for Persons With Disabilities.

(e) Identify specialised/exclusive legislations that are pro-disability but that are replete with inadequacies and deficiencies.

(f) Examine situations and policies responsible for generating/creating disabilities.

8. INCLUSION
(g) Evolve appropriate alternative policy framework on Disability. It is indeed a happy augury that after a long and arduous battle, organisations of Persons With Disabilities have succeeded in getting the United Nations Organization to set in motion processes that will culminate into the adoption of a Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities by its General Assembly. While legislations and international instruments are very much required, it is important that they work towards bringing about a change of heart in the people so that inclusion of Persons With Disabilities is real and not tokenistic. Will societies and communities rise to the occasion?

Source:
8.6 TOWARDS A BARRIER FREE ENVIRONMENT

Various potential barriers and avenues of inclusion of Persons With Disabilities in the societies, communities and environment have been discussed previously. This chapter deals with creating a barrier free environment for persons with disabilities and others who have difficulties. The chapter deals with making buildings physically accessible to Persons With Disabilities for easy access. The term access refers to a process which enables persons with disabilities to live a life with dignity and respect. Access is a right of every citizen to live with dignity and respect.

This section will provide tips to make a building, and environment more accessible to Persons With Disabilities so that they can enjoy the same with others.

I Special Needs For Persons With Disabilities:-

a. Non-Ambulatory Disabilities (Wheel chair users) Wheel chair users should be able to use the facilities within the built environment alone without a helper’s assistance. A wheelchair may be operated by the user alone or with a helper’s assistance. However, wheelchair design must assume that the user should be able to operate the wheelchair without help.

The width and length of the wheel chair, its control and the diameter of the casters decide the following:
- Width of entrances and exits (clear 900mm)
- Width of the passage/corridor (minimum 900mm)
- Slope of climbing (minimum ramp slope 1:12)
- Passing over different levels and grooves (grating with narrow slots in the direction of movement and level difference to limit to 2cm or less)
- Transferring from wheel chair (adequate space is required to transfer from wheel chair to toilet seat and bed.

b. Semi-Ambulatory Disabilities (Persons with impaired walking): Persons in this category are those who use walking aids such as crutches or canes, who are amputees, people affected by polio, who have chest ailments or heart disease etc including those who can not walk without a cane and those who have some trouble in their upper or lower limbs although they can walk unassisted.

Design requirements:
- Width of passage for crutch users (minimum 900mm)
- Finishes of floor surface must be non-slip floor material.
- Installation of handrail to support the body weight at the critical places e.g. staircase, toilet, ramp, passage with a change of level (800-850 mm).
- Extension of handrail on the flat landing at the top and bottom of the stairs (300mm)
- To prevent slipping off the cane or crutch from the side of the stairs or ramps (20mm high lip on the exposed edge).

b. Sight Disabilities (Persons with impaired vision): Persons in this category are totally blind or with impaired vision. Visually impaired persons make use of other senses such as hearing or touch to compensate for the lack of vision. It is necessary to give instructions accessible through the sense of touch (hands, fingers or legs). While walking with a white cane to spot their feet near the tip of the cane the persons may bump his or her head or
shoulder against protruding objects. Persons with low vision may be able to discriminate between dark and bright shades and difference in primary colors.

**Design requirements:**
- Use of guiding blocks for persons with impaired vision to guide them within the buildings and facilities and outside the building.
- Installation of information board in braille.
- Installation of audible signages (announcements)
- Removal of any protruding objects and sufficient walking space for safe walking.
- For persons with low vision use of contrasting color arrangements.

**d. Hearing Disabilities (Persons with impaired hearing):** Persons in this category are totally deaf or have difficulty in hearing. They generally use their sight to gather information in public places.

**Design requirements**
- Provision of information board in an easily understandable manner.
- Provision of illuminated signages, layout diagrams to help the persons easily reach the desired place.

**e. Elderly Persons:** Elderly persons may suffer from impaired mobility, sight disabilities (partially or fully), hearing disabilities or any other physical difficulties, for which the design guidelines for them within and outside the buildings and facilities shall be similar to the other physically disabled persons.

**II. Accessible Design Minimum Recommended Provisions**

**Kerbs and Crossings**
The pavement should be dropped to be flush with the road at a gradient no greater than 1:12 on both sides of necessary and convenient crossing points. The crossing points should also be highlighted by tactile paving/guiding blocks.

**Ramps:** A ramp suitable for use by wheelchair users will be no steeper than 1:12 for a distance of up to 5m or 1:15 for a distance of up to 10m. Thereafter a landing at least 1.5m long is required. The ramp should have a clear unobstructed width of 1000mm, a non-slip finish and continuous handrails on both sides at 900mm above the surface of the ramp. It should also have landings 1.2m deep, clear of any door swing, at its head and foot and an up-stand of at least 100mm on any open side of the flight or landing. Wherever possible a ramp should be accompanied by a flight of easy going steps.

**Steps:** Easy going external steps will have even risers, no greater than 150mm, and treads at least 280mm deep (risers should not be open). The maximum height of a flight between landings will be 1.2m. Landings will be 1.2m deep, clear of any door swing. The steps will have an unobstructed width of at least 1000mm and have continuous handrails on both sides at 900mm above the flight pitch line. The step nosing should be highlighted in a contrasting colour and there should be tactile (corduroy) paving 400mm back from the edge of the top step to alert users to the potential hazard.

**Handrails:** Handrails should be circular in section with a diameter of 45-50mm. The handrail should stand at least 45mm proud of the flank wall. They should also continue by at least 300mm beyond the head and foot of the flight in the line of travel.
**Lobbies:** Lobbies should be large enough to enable a wheelchair user to move through the first set of doors, close them and manoeuvre to open the second set.

**Doors and Corridors:** External doors should provide a clear opening width of at least 800mm and internal doors a minimum of 750mm. Doors should be fitted with lever action handles or push plates and D-handles of circular section.
- Doors should also be fitted with vision panels at least between 900 and 1500mm affl.
- Doors should be colour contrasted with the surrounding wall and should be no heavier than 25N to open.
- A distance of 300mm should be provided beyond the leading edge of a door to enable a wheelchair user to maneuver and to reach the handle.
- Corridors should have an unobstructed width of at least 1200mm

**Signage:** Signs should be mounted between 1400 and 1700mm affl, they should be produced in Sans Serif script, the individual characters between 15 and 50mm tall, raised by 1-1.5mm and colour contrasted with their background.

**Switch and Socket positions:** All switches and sockets should be mounted within a zone between 450 and 1200mm affl. They should be provided in a colour that contrasts with the surrounding wall or else surrounded by a contrasting strip of colour.

**Lifts:** An accessible lift should measure at least 1100x1400mm internally. There should be a handrail on three sides of the lift at 900mm affl and the wall opposite the door should be mirrored above the handrail. The doors should open automatically and provide a clear opening width of at least 800mm. There should be a clear landing at least 1500x1500mm in front of the open doors. The landing and car controls should be located between 900 and 1200mm affl and at least 400mm from any corner. Controls and floor level information should be embossed so that they can be read through touch and, particularly in larger buildings, supplemented by audio and illuminated indicators. The lift dwell time should be at least 5 seconds and the door closer should be fitted with a photo-eye or infrared re-activating device.

**Counters and work surfaces:** A minimum of 725mm clear space below is required to enable the majority of wheelchair users to pull up comfortably to the surface, the top of which should be no higher than 760mm affl.

**Glossary:**
- Ambulant Persons With Disabilities = people with mobility impairments but who do not use a wheelchair i.e. those who use sticks, crutches or walking frames. This category also includes people with visual impairments who are liable to trip on incidental obstacles or uneven surfaces.
- affl = above - finished - floor - level
- sans serif script = fonts/script like Arial (this font) or Comic Sans without tails or curls like Lucida Handwriting.

**III. Access Auditing and Action Planning**

Even if every new building were constructed in line with the most progressive guidance one would still be left with the vast majority of the existing building stock and the country's infrastructure that is on the whole inaccessible. A methodology has therefore been developed by which the built environment can be objectively assessed and remedial works recommended.

An Access Audit is a survey of a building, its surroundings and the way it is used and managed. It is conducted by following a number of sequential routes through the premises; those taken by different staff groups and service users or followed in an emergency
Evacuation. Every aspect of the environment is examined, as it occurs, and is measured against predetermined access criteria. As the auditor moves around the building, he/she will note the precise nature of the barriers that exist and examine the local conditions with a view to how they might be overcome. Is there room, for instance, to construct a ramp or to extend the size of a toilet cubicle?

The nature of an audit will vary according to a number of factors and the pre-audit briefing is important, whether the audit is to be undertaken in-house or by an outside consultant.

The variables that must be agreed before the audit takes place will include:

- What access criteria are to be used, nationally agreed minimum provisions or best practice?
- Who will the audit address and therefore what style should the report adopt?
- What is the timescale for the work?
- How is the building used, by what groups of people at what times?
- How are the building and its operations managed?
- What is the regular/planned maintenance programme?
- Are there any proposed changes to the building's fabric or the organisation of spaces within?
- Have any other audits been undertaken for instance in relation to health and safety, fire evacuation procedures etc.?
- What consultation with building users has taken place or will be possible?
- What is the available budget for auditing and implementation of the report's findings?

When the brief is agreed; the scale, pitch, detail and logic of the audit can be planned and the report style and format set out. To ensure continuity and consistency in the detailed scrutiny of individual building elements it is often easier, particularly for the inexperienced auditor, to use a proforma checklist like the one produced by SPASTN. It works as an aide memoir to the auditor asking a series of detailed questions that follow a typical journey through a building. The relevant design criteria are printed alongside the question so that the auditor can make an immediate comparison. Besides that there is a space provided to describe the current situation and another to note a possible remedy, taking into account local circumstances. The completed checklist will then form the basis of the auditors report.
Extract from SPASTN Checklist

**Workspace**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Access Criteria</th>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Is it possible to control lighting and ventilation locally?</td>
<td>Controls for lighting, fans, A/C, and window latches should be installed between 450 and 1200mm aff. Task lighting should preferably be made available at each workstation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 If the workspace is open plan, have any measures been taken to reduce the levels and nuisance caused by background noise?</td>
<td>Hard surfaces and furnishings reflect and exacerbate the problem of background noise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Is there sufficient circulation space provided for wheelchair users in the workspace? Is the circulation space maintained clear of obstruction?</td>
<td>To pass between obstacles a minimum width of 800mm is required, to turn through 900 or to access a shelf or surface sideways 1000mm is required, and to turn to and open a cupboard or drawer a width of 1350mm is required. A complete turning circle, for the majority of wheelchair users is 1500mm in diameter.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Problems might include:**
- a doorway that is too narrow to permit a wheelchair user to pass through;
- the absence of any grab rails in the bathroom; or
- lack of any colour contrast in the decoration or fitting out of the workspace

**Remedial action might include a recommendation to:**
- remove or alter an obstruction;
- provide the means of avoiding an obstruction; or
- reorganise the use of spaces to minimize the impact of the obstruction.

In any event recommendations should be prioritised according to whether they present an immediate hazard, whether the present arrangement falls below the minimum recommended provision or whether improvement is a matter of good practice. It will generally be for the
building manager to draw up a properly prioritised implementation programme. Some of the report’s recommendations will be low-priced and easy to execute and might be incorporated into existing maintenance programmes while others may require greater consideration and expenditure in which case interim solutions should be devised. However, as a general rule, implementation should follow the same sequential routes as the original audit. This may seem obvious but it is remarkable the number of accessible toilets that have been constructed in inaccessible locations. And wherever possible, building users should be consulted on the prioritisation of work and on the effectiveness of proposed solutions.

Access Auditing should not be a one off exercise. Over time, the use of the building might change and different management strategies introduced that affect the building’s accessibility. Technical advances can also facilitate better access, the company might become more prosperous and/or the cost of equipment drops to become affordable. It is recommended therefore that an audit is undertaken regularly and the prioritised lists of remedial works kept under constant review.

Conclusion:
This research endeavours to explain the concept of inclusion. Inclusion can be understood better when the various forms and manifestations of exclusion are understood. Exclusion is one of the major outcomes of various forms and manifestations of discrimination. Thus discrimination is the basic issue which causes exclusion of Persons With Disabilities in all spheres of life. Persons With Disabilities encounter exclusion on a day to day basis at all levels and all walks of life. They are excluded from family, games, peer groups, educational institutions, livelihoods, meetings, state decision making bodies, schemes, programmes, policies, laws, religion, cultural activities, politics, married and family life and so on and so forth. If a list is made of different forms and manifestations of exclusion it will be endless. Exclusion provides a base for understanding the concept of inclusion. An attempt has been made here to explain the concept of inclusion through three dilutions and various bases for inclusion. It is important to understand what it means for Persons With Disabilities who live in rural areas to lead a life of dignity who are struggling to do so. It is all about living a life with dignity like their non disabled fellow beings. They want to be included in their families, games, schools, work places, functions, public places, friends groups, meetings, programmes, schemes, laws, policies, institutions, places of worship, rituals, public gatherings, recreation places, decision making bodies which will affect their lives and what else and what not. There is nothing where these groups do not want to be included.

General perception vis-à-vis the ground facts: The questionnaire sent to the pioneers brings out the fact that 90% of the respondents strongly feel that inclusion is not just including Persons With Disabilities in the existing groups but inclusion of them in all social affairs. 99% Persons With Disabilities, 100% communities and 74% pioneers strongly feel that the ignorance, fear, prejudices, negative attitudes and acute poverty are the root causes for the problems of Persons With Disabilities in India. 99% Persons With Disabilities strongly feel that negative attitudes and inaccessible structures hinder the process of inclusion and empowerment which will have to be removed through a coordinated effort. 98% Persons With Disabilities, 66% communities and 79% pioneers strongly feel that services must be included in all the ministries, departments and institutions of the state. 64% of the respondents strongly feel that majority of the children with disabilities can study in regular schools. 69% of the respondents from the pioneers feel that disability must be included as a priority agenda by all national and international development agencies. 81% of the respondents from the pioneers strongly feel that Persons With Disabilities could engage in any kind of livelihood options depending on the type and degree of disability, interest and aptitude of the individual. 55% of the respondents strongly feel that listing of jobs by the state

8. INCLUSION
for Persons With Disabilities may narrow down the scope and limit the opportunities; however, some times this list may compel the officials to recruit Persons With Disabilities. But the list must be updated time to time as per the science and technological advancements. 98% Persons With Disabilities strongly feel that CBR initiative has enhanced opportunities in their communities at all levels and in all spheres. 58% Persons With Disabilities strongly disagree with the statement that they opt for exclusive services rather than inclusive if offered.

The primary data from the ground clearly points out that a CBR programme has facilitated the process of inclusion effectively. 100% of Persons With Disabilities and 83% of communities feel that Persons With Disabilities participate in all walks of life including developmental process. 100% of Persons With Disabilities and 83% of communities say that 38% of the places are accessible to Persons With Disabilities in their communities where they live. 83% of respondents of Persons With Disabilities say that they are actively involved in the decision making process of family and communities to an extent of 59%. Majority of the respondents with and without disabilities strongly feel that organising Persons With Disabilities and their families in to exclusive Self Help and Advocacy Groups (SHAGs) do not hamper the process of inclusion since these SHAGs play a key and instrumental role in empowering and promoting holistic development of Persons With Disabilities at village levels. 78% pioneers and 89% respondents with disabilities and their families strongly feel that the inclusion is complete, full, effective and meaningful participation of Persons With Disabilities in all aspects of socio-economic, political, cultural, religious and personal life at all levels depending on age, gender, socio-economic conditions of that given individual without any barriers and prejudices. Inclusion starts with the family of an individual with disabilities. The family inclusion includes early childhood stimulation, care, protection, recreation, decision making, house-hold chores and all other affairs of the family. 98% respondents with and without disabilities strongly feel that inclusion is not just about persons/children with disabilities but about all of us. They strongly feel that society and community should create enabling conditions so that every individual including a Person With Disability also lives with others with respect and dignity. 85% respondents strongly feel that services, facilities, schemes and programmes should be inclusive so that Persons With Disabilities could access basic and essential services at every levels like non-disabled people.

There are two streams of thinkers in the disability sector. The first stream feels that inclusion is a process whereas the second stream feels that inclusion is a goal. The moderate school strongly feels that it is both a process and goal. The process makes attempts to prepare society and communities for inclusion and goal ensures Persons With Disabilities to be included in an effective and meaningful way. This dream of an inclusive ideal society can be created only when there is a strong political will, commitment, conviction and strong determination of all the actors concerned with a combined, coordinated and collective action and efforts.