

An Analytical Review of Special Education in India: Challenges and Opportunities

Mohd Rafi Paray

Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya Indore M.P

Abstract

A special education curriculum ought to be individualised to meet the requirements of each and every student. Students with a wide range of disabilities can receive many levels of help from special educators, depending on the specific need of each student. These services are provided along a continuum. It is of the utmost importance that special education programmes be personalised in order to cater to the specific constellation of requirements posed by each individual student. When India gained its independence in 1947 from Great Britain, the government of India became significantly more involved in the delivery of educational, rehabilitation, and social services. As a result, India has been steadily moving toward a paradigm of inclusive education over the course of the previous four decades. This paper discusses the implementation of such a model in relation to the prevalence and incidence rates of disability in India as well as working within family environments that often involve three to four generations of family members and also focus on the Education by NEP 2020. Specifically, the article focuses on the prevalence and incidence rates of disability in India. A high level of poverty, appropriate teacher preparation of special education teachers, a lack of binding national laws concerned with inclusive education, a dual governmental administration for special education services, and citizen's and special education professionals' strong concern about whether or not inclusive education practises can be carried out are all included as challenges that an inclusive education system faces in India.

keywords: *Special Education, Programmes, Disabilities, Education, etc.*

1. Introduction

People with disabilities in India have always lived alongside the general population, despite the fact that their treatment and views toward them have changed over time. As a result, they lived with their families rather than in the community. Even the Gurukula Ashram (educational institutions) promoted the fundamental educational principles of special education, such as determining the abilities and needs of each student, tailoring teaching targets and methods to match their skills and interests, and preparing them to meet the social expectations of their future interests. etc. Even though Dhritrashtra was visually challenged, he was nonetheless monarch of all India, as evidenced by the epic Mahabharata.

Disabilities in India

Around 30 million children in India have some sort of disability, according to a UNICEF Report on the Status of Disabilities in India (2000). Twenty million of India's 2,000 million school-aged (6-14-year-old) children require special needs schooling, according to a different study, the sixth All-India Educational Survey (RCI, 2000). Despite the gap in these data, it is obvious that a considerable percentage of students with special needs require proper educational programmes. The Government of India (GoI) began policy changes and plans for special needs and inclusive education in response to the rising number of special needs population and regional imbalances. Many changes have taken place in India's educational system since it gained independence from the British in 1947. The post-independence era and the economic and social development policies implemented in the last four decades have had a significant impact on the entire educational system in India.

2. Inclusive Schooling for India

The remainder of the chapter focuses on the GoI's recent decades of tremendous progress in promoting inclusive education in its national legislation and policy. To give an idea of how India's special education system has evolved over the last four decades, we'll look at some of the most significant projects from each of those decades.

The Indian Education Commission, widely known as the Kothari

The first legislative body to bring attention to the plight of disabled children was the Commission (Kothari, 1966), which was established under the 1964 Plan of Action (Alur, 2002; Puri & Abraham, 2004). Children with impairments should be included in mainstream education, according to the report's strong recommendations. The commission's proposal on the allocation of monies for children with disabilities included the following:

Funding for the Ministry of Education and NCERT should be provided for the study of children with disabilities. The cell's primary role would be to keep up-to-date on the latest research taking place in the United

States and overseas, as well as to provide teachers with educational materials. On p. 124 of (Kothari Commission, 1966)

Children with disabilities should be educated "inseparably" from the general education system, according to the Commission (Azad, 1996, p. 4) and should be arranged, not only on humanitarian grounds, but also on the basis of utility (Azad, 1996; Puri & Abraham, 2004). Aside from these four categories of impairment, the Commission set specific goals for 1986: 15% of the blind, deaf and orthopedically handicapped would be educated; 5% of the mentally retarded would also be educated (Panda, 1996; RCI, 2000). Aside from that, the Commission strongly advocated for inclusive education as an educational service delivery paradigm because it was both cost-effective and would foster better understanding between children with and without disabilities (Panda, 1996; Puri & Abraham, 2004). Despite the fact that the Kothari Commission's recommendations were implemented in the 1968 National Education Policy, which recommended: (a) expanding educational facilities for children with physical and mental disabilities; and (b) developing an integrated programme to allow children with disabilities to study in regular classrooms, it was evident that little progress had been made toward achieving the commission's goals (Azad, 1996). (Jha, 2002).

Decade of 1980s

In 1981, the first-ever International Year for Disabled Persons (IYDP) was held as a direct result of the IEDC initiative. The principal thrust of the year was the UN's mandate that all countries draught disability-inclusive legislation. The year 1981 was designated as the "International Year of the Disabled Persons" by a resolution to which India was one of the initial signatories. The United Nations General Assembly's resolutions on the rights of individuals with disabilities highlighted India's dedication to this cause (RCI, 2000). The GoI responded to United Nations aspirations by enacting a series of laws and regulations aimed at promoting integrated education in Japan (RCI, 2000).

Inclusive education for children with impairments was prioritised by the GoI in its Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-1985). The government's commitment to inclusive education may be seen in the subsequent growth in funding, policy, legislation, and programmes. Special emphasis is placed on inclusive education under the GoI's National Policy on Education (NPE) (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1986), as well as its Project Integrated Education for Disabled (PIED) (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1987).

The GoI's 1986 National Policy on Education (NPE) was an important step toward ensuring equal access to education for students with disabilities (RCI, 2000). NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2000) envisioned a genuine cooperation between the federal government and the states. According to the policy, "the physically and mentally handicapped" were to be integrated into the broader population as equal partners, "preparing them for normal growth and to confront life with courage and confidence" (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1986).

UNICEF and the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) helped NCERT establish PIED for children with disabilities in order to better implement the IEDC programme, which was based on NPE 1986 principles (Dasgupta, 2002). There were no intellectually disabled children included in the scope of this experiment, nevertheless (RCI, 2000). It was carried out in 10 states and territories, including Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, and Delhi. To provide enough coverage, ten blocks in each state and territory were chosen using the "composite area" approach. For each of these blocks, all of the schools inside that block have to implement integrated education programmes. Schools were grouped together in the designated project area to share resources, such as teaching materials and instrumental aids as well as specialist equipment and teachers who could serve as resources in these fields. Improving access in neighbourhoods and schools for disabled children was a major goal of PIED (Alur, 2002). The training of ordinary classroom teachers to work with pupils with impairments was a crucial component of this endeavour. There were three levels of training for teachers: basic, intermediate, and advanced.

Decade of the 1990s

A slew of initiatives and laws were introduced by the GI during this time period to help bolster inclusion efforts. NPE-POA, DPEP, and the historic law, the Persons with Disabilities Act of 1995 were only few of the initiatives that took place in the 1990s and early 2000s. As of 1992, the NPE-POA has been renamed the NPE-POA-POA (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1992). The 1986 NPE was criticised for its lack of commitment to universalizing elementary education for all children, particularly for those with impairments, which led to the revision of the act (Jangira & Ahuja, 1993). On the other hand, the 1992 NPE-POA reiterated the principle of integration by stating that those children who may be enrolled in a special school for the acquisition of daily living skills, plus curriculum skills, communication skills, and basic academic skills, should be subsequently integrated in regular schools (Dasgupta, 2002). Nonformal, adult, vocational and teacher education programmes financed by the central government should all adhere to the notion of integration (Ministry of

Human Resource Development, 1992). The NPE-POA (1992) emphasised the importance of incorporating a module on the education of children with disabilities as an integral component in training for educational planners and administrators; and (ii) it upgraded teacher education, especially for primary school teachers, by introducing the "concept of teacher accountability" to the students, their parents, the community, and to their profession as a whole as a part of their training. In addition, a resolution was passed to establish the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) to give regular school teachers with preservice and in-service education to improve their abilities to meet the needs of students with disabilities in their classrooms. For children who could attend conventional primary schools and those who needed special education in regular schools or special classes, the NPE-POA made a significant commitment to ensure their universal enrollment by the end of the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002). (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1992, p. 18). The GoI's dedication to integrated education was further demonstrated by this administrative initiative.

In addition, coordination committees were established at the national and state levels, led by commissioners selected at the central and state levels, in order to effectively implement the legislation. The Chief Commissioner, an important statutory functionary, is responsible for coordinating the work of the State Commissioners for Persons with Disabilities, monitoring the utilisation of funds disbursed by the Central Government, and taking appropriate action to protect the rights and facilities made available to persons with disabilities (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 2004). In addition, the commissioners have the authority to take legal action to protect the rights of the disabled, especially those relating to equal educational opportunity (Jha, 2002). The GoI in its Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002) allocated billion rupees for the provision of integrated education in order to increase educational possibilities for children with disabilities in India.

According to the "National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act," the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment set up the National Trust Act (Ministry of Law Justice and Company Affairs, 1999). There were provisions for pupils with autism, intellectual impairment and cerebral palsy as a result of this legislation strengthening the PWD Act of 1995.

Decade of the 21st century

The inclusion movement in India has been bolstered by a number of notable efforts during the past decade. In addition to these initiatives, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (2000), the Action Plan for Inclusion in Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities (2005), and the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (2006), among others, have all been implemented to ensure that all children and youth with disabilities have equal access to educational opportunities (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2009a). More information is provided in the following sections.

Goals stated by the SarvaShikshaAbhiyan (Education for All Movement) (SSA) programme, which began in 2000, included the goal of achieving Universal Elementary Education (UEE) by 2010. The "zero rejection" foundation of the programme supported the inclusion of children with impairments in mainstream primary schools. Each special-needs child received 1,200 rupees a year from the Social Security Administration. Money from the Special Education Opportunity Fund was earmarked for aiding students with disabilities to participate in regular courses. As a result of the programme, over 1.5 million children with impairments between the ages of 6 and 14 were located and enrolled in regular schools. Many educational opportunities, tools, and services for students with disabilities were made available to them as part of the SSA programme. In addition to traditional schooling, these options included open learning systems and open schools, alternative education, distance education, special education facilities and, in some cases, home-based instruction. They also included the itinerant teacher model of education, remedial instruction, part-time classes and Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR). Alur and Rioux (2004), on the other hand, contend that the poor disbursement of financial aid hampered the implementation of SSA.

Persons with disabilities are a great human resource for the country, and the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (2006) aimed to establish an environment in which they could participate fully in all aspects of life. The policy's main focus was on disability prevention, rehabilitation, and physical rehabilitation. Early detection and intervention, counselling and medical rehabilitation, the use of assistive devices, the development of rehabilitation professionals, education for persons with disabilities, economic rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, serving women and children with disabilities, creating barrier-free environments and providing social security were just a few of the specific aspects of the programme that were addressed.

In order to help students with special needs in the secondary level, the SSA introduced Inclusive Education for the Disabled at the Secondary Stage (IEDSS), which was designed to support inclusion of children with special needs in early childhood education and elementary education. Because teenagers with disabilities are often denied secondary education, the IEDSS was designed to help them participate in the regular educational system

in a more effective and efficient manner. The plan was for making every school "disabled-friendly." IEDSS planned to identify students with disabilities at the secondary level, grant 3,000 rupees per child per year for instructional resources, and build up model schools in every state to develop and replicate inclusive education practises.

Free and compulsory education for all children aged 6-14 was recommended under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2009b). In addition, the law mandated that 25 percent of classroom seats be reserved for students from "disadvantaged sections" in both public and private institutions. Disadvantaged parts" of the law, as defined by the PDA, cover children with disabilities. A measure amending the Act was enacted by the Indian parliament in 2012. As a result of this legislation, school-at-home options were made available to students with impairments such as autism, cerebral palsy, intellectual disability, and multiples. This choice should not be used as a way for schools to avoid taking these youngsters into their classes, according to the bill.

3. Current India Educational Difficulties for Inclusive Learning

India's recent education reforms have placed a high priority on inclusive education. Less than 1% of children with disabilities attend school in an inclusive setting, despite decades of government effort (The Hindu, 2013). Poverty, the absence of a definitive law on inclusive education, a lack of resources, and India's distinct cultural and socioeconomic background all pose significant challenges to the inclusion of children with disabilities in conventional education settings in this country.

It has been difficult to implement inclusive education in India because of the country's extreme poverty. Indian poverty persists despite recent economic progress. For as many as 400 million Indians, the World Bank estimates that they are living on less than 82 pence a day (The Telegraph, 2013). India's annual per capita income is now estimated by Business Standard to be Rupees 68,748 (\$1,087 USD) according to the most recent data available. Even in impoverished countries, this is a far cry from the norm. It's no secret that poverty and a lack of human resources are to blame for several of the most common causes of disability: malnutrition, improper childbirth practises, disease and accident. As a result, children from low-income families face a substantially higher risk of cognitive impairment. In many cases, a disabled kid or a member of the family becomes a burden on the family's limited resources and lowers its morale, pushing it farther into poverty. Children with disabilities in India have a lack of educational opportunities due to poverty. The majority of children with impairments, according to Karna (1999), are in households with incomes well below the federal poverty line. Many of these children are forced to work as child labour in order to provide for their families' basic needs. Subsistence takes precedence over education for the vast majority of these children and their families, whose primary concerns are the provision of food and shelter. In the minds of many, especially those with disabilities, this idea significantly hinders their ability to receive an adequate education.



Figure1. shows the Children with Disabilities

Lack of enforceable rules in India is another important obstacle to the successful implementation of inclusive education. The PWD Act, RTE Act, and other legislations have been passed in India to promote inclusive education. There were no binding clauses such as "zero reject," "least restrictive environment," "due process," and others included in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) passed by the United States Congress in 2004, so the PWD Act and other provisions did not produce the desired result in terms of creating equitable educational opportunities for children with disabilities in India.. Legislation promoting inclusive education in India is merely a wishful thinking in the absence of legally obligatory regulations.

Since the introduction of inclusive education in India, there has been a significant shortfall in resources. Alur (2002), Bhatnagar (2013), and Das (Gichuru) and Singh (2013), to name a few scholars, have argued that the lack of resources in India has been a key impediment to the implementation of inclusion programmes. "Policy without finance is no policy at all," claims Alur (2002). (p. 25). To be successful, the inclusion education plan needs to be based on the prevalence of special educational needs, according to Jangira (2002). One

recommendation made by the Working Group on Elementary Education and Literacy in support of inclusive education was to allocate Rupees 3,000 per year for each child with special needs, with an additional 1,000 Rupees going to resource teachers. Another recommendation was to allocate Rupees 1,000 to resource teachers to purchase aids and appliances.

The parallel administration of special education in India may also be a factor in the country's failure to achieve its inclusion goals. Special schools are administered by the Ministry of Social Welfare, whereas inclusive education is handled by the Department of Education in the Ministry of Human Resources Development (Jangira, 2002). For inclusive education to be effective, it must also be coordinated across several operational sectors, including welfare, women's and children's development, and health. However, the inclusion process at the school level is being slowed down by the lack of a coordinated structure at the federal, state, district, or subdistrict level (Jangira, 2002). A proper regulatory framework for monitoring and enforcing accountability for the successful implementation of inclusive education programmes at all levels is also lacking (Alur, 2002; Jangira, 2002).

Teachers' worries and a lack of support for inclusive education in India are also significant challenges. Many general education teachers in India, according to the available research on teacher attitudes and concerns, favour inclusion theoretically, but most are deeply concerned about their ability to successfully implement it (Bhatnagar & Das, 2013; Das, Kuyini, & Desai, 2013; Shah, 2005). When it comes to working with students who have special needs, many general education teachers have doubts about their own abilities as well as those of their colleagues (Bhatnagar, 2006; Shah, 2005). Another problem is a lack of skilled workers who can successfully fulfil the requirements of children who have special needs. It's been noted by a number of researchers that typical Indian school instructors report not obtaining adequate training in instructional strategies for special education (e.g., Das, 2001; Jangria, Singh, & Yadav, 1995; Shah, Das, Desai, & Tiwari, 2014). It is unjust to expect these teachers to do a task for which they have not been trained.

4. Serving Indian Families with Disabled Children

Providing care to children with impairments necessitates an understanding of Indian family structure. Indian households, which might comprise three or four generations of one family, do not follow the usual "Western" notion of a nuclear family. In India, joint and nuclear families exist in nearly equal numbers, however there are some regional differences in the structure of the family. More than 60% of Indian families are nuclear in the southern part of the country, although this figure is only 42% in the north. Industrialization, urbanisation, increasing mobility, and Western-world influence have all contributed to the decline of the joint family system (Pinto & Sahur, 2001). Professionals must be mindful of the roles of family members while speaking with them. When it comes to important financial and non-household decisions, males often play the lead role. However, women typically play the lead position when it comes to household chores and the implementation of any interventions at home. Professionals, on the other hand, must adapt their communication style while interacting with members of the family. Another issue that requires the attention of experts is the evolving character of the Indian family. Many families still have one principal breadwinner (usually a man), however this has altered dramatically in the recent decade as a result of rising industrialisation and urbanisation in the country. Because of this, India has seen a rise in the number of "nuclear families." It used to be that grandparents or other family members would take care of the impaired child, but this support structure is gradually diminishing and putting an increasing strain on the families of children with special needs. There is still a stigma attached to disability in India for families caring for children with disabilities.

Rural places have a higher incidence of this. For this reason, many parents prefer inclusive education, despite the fact that their children attend a school that provides just limited services in most cases. However, in the last decade or so, the media has played a big role in raising public awareness of disability and lessening the stigma associated with it.

5. PREPATION FOR TEACHERS

While India's special education teacher training has evolved significantly over the last two decades, it is still falling short of meeting the growing demand for educators in the country. In the 1980s, the GoI established national institutes on various disabilities (e.g., NIMH, NIVH) in order to address the needs of special education teachers in the country. A number of national institutions and regional centres across the country were crucial in the development of special education bachelor's degree and diploma programmes. For example, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) began offering a Bachelor's degree in Mental Retardation (BMR) in 1987. Several other national institutions have begun similar efforts. Over time, the number of courses provided by this and other colleges rose significantly. Courses in special education and related subjects range from certificate programmes lasting up to three months to doctoral degrees. Research in special education and unique Indian

teaching methods were among the many contributions made by these national institutes to India's workforce development. After the RCI Act was passed in 1992 by the GoI to regulate special education and rehabilitation courses conducted by government agencies and non-governmental organisations, RCI was established in 1993. RCI has played an important role in guaranteeing the high quality of teacher education programmes. Syllabi for students with impairments are monitored and regulated by this law. In addition, it maintains a Central Rehabilitation Register of all trained experts and people working in the field of Rehabilitation and Special Education in India. Approximately 60 distinct types of special education and related courses are available across the country, according to the most recent data from the RCI website. Regular and distance delivery options are both available for these classes.

Researchers have found a dearth of training among India's normal instructors when it comes to including children with disabilities and providing their specific requirements in that context. 310 primary and 130 secondary regular school teachers in Delhi were interviewed by Das (2001), who found that the great majority had no training in coping with special needs children. In spite of the fact that their classrooms were already overcrowded and under-resourced, these teachers were nevertheless tasked with serving the requirements of all of their students. A lack of preparedness for inclusive education has been noted by Bhatnagar (2006) and Shah (2005).

6. EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS UNDER NEP 2020

After a hiatus of 34 years, the National Education Policy has finally been formulated, and it is based on the recommendation that was provided by the Kasturirangan Committee (2019). This is an extremely all-encompassing policy that encompasses every single degree of schooling. The strategy was broken up into four different elements. Education that is both equitable and inclusive is included in the scope of school education (NEP,2020).

The RPWD act of 2016 is compatible with the NEP 2020 plan. Inclusive education is described as a "system of education in which students with and without disabilities learn together and the system of teaching and learning is suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of different types of students with disabilities" in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act of 2016, which was passed in 2016. (RPWD Act, 2016). Additionally, the RPWD act reaffirmed the provision of free education for children with disabilities up until the age of 18 years, provided that the conditions of the school are appropriate (Banga, 2015). The RPWD act also expanded the reserve for persons with physical disabilities from 3 percent to 5 percent in all government institutions of higher education. Previously, the quota was only 3 percent. The term "person with benchmark disability" refers to anyone who meets the requirements of the RPWD legislation and has at least 40 percent of the 21 disabilities stated in the act. As another anti-discrimination measure, the act emphasised the importance of providing access without any barriers (Narayan, John 2017).

a) Formal Education

All of the recommendations made by the RPWD Act 2016 with regard to educational opportunities are supported by NEP 2020. The policy has given the highest emphasis to permitting regular schooling processes for children with disabilities, starting from the foundational stage and continuing all the way through higher education. Children who have disabilities ranging from moderate to severe will have the option of attending either regular or special schools (NEP 2020, Part-I, Section 6.10).

b) Multi-School Campus

The school complex will receive a resource centre that is physically located within the complex itself, in addition to other resources. In addition to this, the school is responsible for the recruitment and cross-disability training of special educators. In order to fulfil the needs of the child who has a disability and to ensure that there are no barriers in the way of access, the school will be given the resources it needs to provide tailored accommodations and support mechanisms (NEP 2020, Part-I, Section 6.11).

c) Instructional Materials, Aids to Learning, and Adaptive Technology

In order to create the national curricular framework, NCERT will collaborate with other expert groups such as DEPWD. (NEP 2020, Part-I, Section 6.10). The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) is in charge of generating high-quality educational modules to teach Indian Sign Language and, by extension, to educate other fundamental courses. Because the curriculum will be adaptable depending on the strengths of the children, it will be possible for the kids to go at their own pace while they are learning. At the child's school, appropriate technology-based tools and other assistive devices, as well as teaching-learning materials that are adequate and language-appropriate, such as textbooks in large print and Braille, will be made available in order to integrate and engage the child in the activities that take place in the classroom (NEP 2020, Part-I, Section 6.11).

d) Teacher

The National Education Policy 2020 calls for the modification of various teacher education programmes. Inclusion of sensitization, early intervention, support, and special pedagogy for teaching children with disabilities in teacher education programmes; this will allow for more effective instruction of these students (NEP 2020, Part-I, Section 6.14)

f) Assessment

The National Assessment Centre, also known as PARAKH, will be responsible for drafting the rules and recommending the techniques that will be used for the assessment of children who have disabilities. This is going to be the case for all of the examinations, including the entrance exam, from the primary level on up through higher education (NEP 2020, Part-I, Section 6.13).

f) Schooling Done in the Home
Children who have severe and profound disabilities will still have the opportunity to receive their education at home, as was the case previously. Homeschooling will receive support from resource centres as well as professionals who specialise in special education. In accordance with the recommendations made in the RPwD Act of 2016, all of the guidelines and standards pertaining to homeschooling will be developed. Through the use of a technology-based solution, parents will be oriented so that they may better satisfy their child's varied educational needs. This will be accomplished so that their children will have the best possible educational opportunities (NEP 2020, Part-I, Section 6.12).

E-content for children with special needs by Ministry of Education in 2022

The Guidelines for the Development of Electronic Content for Children with Disabilities were Released Today by the Minister of Education in the United Kingdom (CwDs). E-content for CwDs should be generated in accordance with the criteria, which stipulate that it should be based on the following four principles: perceivable, operable, intelligible, and resilient. Accessibility standards need to be met by the electronic content, which includes text, tables, diagrams, graphics, audios, and videos, among other things. These standards include national standards (GIGW 2.0) and international standards (WCAG 2.1, E-Pub, DAISY etc).

The reading platforms and devices, such as e-pathshala, on which content is accessed and interacts with, as well as the distribution platforms, on which content is uploaded (for example, DIKSHA), are required to comply with certain technical specifications. The committee has suggested making appropriate pedagogical adjustments in order to cater to the particular requirements of students with disabilities.



Figure 2. e-content for CWSN to promote inclusive education

The committee has also suggested that, in stages, traditional textbooks may be converted into user-friendly digital versions of the same material (ADTs). The information included within ADTs ought to be made available in a variety of formats, including text, audio, video, sign language, and so on, in addition to having on/off switches. In addition, CWDs should be allowed the liberty to respond to the ADT's material and activities in a variety of different ways.

Students who have intellectual and developmental disabilities, multiple disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, specific learning disabilities, blindness, low vision, deafness and hard of hearing, and other types of disabilities are targeted by the committee's recommendations for specific guidelines for the development of supplementary e-content. These guidelines are in accordance with the 21 disabilities listed in the RPWD Act 2016, which was passed in 2016.

The PM e-VIDYA programme, which aimed at the development of specialised e-content for the children in the country who have physical or mental impairments, was responsible for the creation of these recommendations (CWDs). In the interest of fostering inclusive education for children with disabilities, also known as children with special needs (CWSN), an effort was made for the very first time to draught up certain guidelines.

Conclusion

The implementation of inclusive education in India appears to be at a crossroads. As a result of a long history of policies, programmes, and laws, India has shown its commitment to membership in recent decades, but it also faces a number of particular obstacles that hinder its ability to fully implement those policies and programmes. In order to make inclusive education a reality for the millions of children with disabilities in India, policymakers must address these issues. Professionals with substantial expertise in the implementation of inclusive education

in other contexts, as well as an awareness of the Indian situation, can provide specific assistance. The placement of the disabled child is not the only thing that will not assist. It is our moral obligation to ensure that every child, regardless of whether or not they have a disability, has access to education if we want our nation to continue to develop. Because India is such a diverse country, it should always look at its differences as opportunities. In a same vein, it is time for people's mentalities to evolve, and they need to start viewing every impairment as a unique ability. This means shifting our attention away from the things these youngsters are unable to perform and instead concentrating on the strengths they already possess. The inclusive education system in India has to overcome a number of obstacles on its way from segregation to inclusion. A shift in mentality is required in order to see the disability not as a limitation but as a unique ability. At long last, the government of India devised such a policy, which takes into account every conceivable aspect of the situation. If the New Education Policy 2020 is put into effect without adequate preparation, it will fail to fulfil its potential as a driver of inclusive education. The inclusive education system will undergo a paradigm shift as a result of this. When taken together, all of the factors that were described above will result in an education that is both effective and of high quality for children who have disabilities. This will assist in bridging the gap between the expectation of inclusive education and the reality of providing such education.

References

- Alur, M. (2002). Introduction: The social construct of disability. In S. Hearty & M. Alur (Eds.), *Education and children with special needs* (pp. 2122). New Delhi: Sage.
- Bhatnagar, N. (2006). Attitudes and concerns of Indian teachers towards integrated education. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Victoria University.
- Bhatnagar, N., & Das, A. K. (2013). Attitudes of secondary school teachers towards inclusive education in New Delhi, India. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*.
- Das, A. K., Kuyini, A. B., & Desai, I. P. (2013). Inclusive education in India: Are the teachers prepared? *International Journal of Special Education*, 28(1), 2736.
- Dasgupta, P. R. (2002). Education for the disabled. In S. Hegarty & M. Alur (Eds.), *Education and children with special needs* (pp. 4150). New Delhi: Sage.
- doi:10.1111/1471-3802.12016
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. (2004). Public Law No. 108-446. United States Congress.
- Jangira, N. K. (2002). Special education needs of children and young adults: An unfinished agenda. In S. Hegarty & M. Alur (Eds.), *Education and children with special needs* (pp. 6776). New Delhi: Sage.
- Karna, G. N. (1999). United nations and rights of disabled persons: A study in Indian perspective. New Delhi: A.P.H. Publishing Corporation.
- Kothari, O. S. (Kothari Commission Report, 1966). Report of the Indian education commission 1964/1966. New Delhi: Ministry of Education.
- Kulakarni, V. R. (2000). Thinking care. Retrieved from cbrnet@vsnl.com. Accessed on March 17.
- Ministry of Human Resource Development. (1986). National policy on education. New Delhi: Department of Education, Government of India.
- Ministry of Human Resource Development. (2000). SarvaShikshaAbhiyan: A programme for the universalization of inclusive education. New Delhi: Department of School Education & Literacy, Government of India.
- Ministry of Human Resource Development. (2005). The action plan for inclusion in education of children and youth with disabilities. New Delhi: Department of Education, Government of India.
- Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. (2004). India 2004: A reference annual. New Delhi: Publication Division.
- Ministry of Law Justice and Company Affairs. (1996). The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. New Delhi: Government of India.
- Ministry of Law Justice and Company Affairs. (1999). The National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act. New Delhi: Government of India.
- NCERT. (2000, July 45). UNESCO-NCERT need assessment workshop for Asia Pacific region. International Centre for Special Needs Education. Department of Education of Groups with Special Needs, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi.
- Panda, K. C. (1996). Research in special education. *Indian Educational Review*, 31(2), 115.
- Pandey, R. S., & Advani, L. (1997). Perspectives in disability and rehabilitation. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.
- Puri, M., & Abraham, G. (2004). Handbook of inclusive education for educators, administrators, and planners. New Delhi: Sage.
- Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI). (2000). Status of disability. New Delhi: Rehabilitation Council of India.
- Schuelka, Johnstone (2012). Global trends in meeting the educational rights of children with disabilities: From international institutions to local responses. Retrieved September 26, 2020, from <https://core.ac.uk/>.

- Shah, R., Das, A. K., Desai, I. P., & Tiwari, A. (2014). Teachers' concerns about inclusive education in Ahmedabad, India. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*. doi:10.1111/1471-3802.12054
- Singal, N. (2005). Mapping the field of inclusive education: A review of the Indian literature. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 9(4), 331-350.