

**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: AN ANALYSIS OF AREA IN RESEARCH
ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN INDIA AFTER RTE, ACT 2009****Dr. Jasmer Singh***Assistant Professor, National Institute for the Visually Handicapped
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The basic structure of the Constitution of India as reflected in the Preamble ensures social, economic and political justice as well as equality of status and of opportunity to all citizens of India. It is thus constitutional obligation of the State to ensure equal justice and equality to all citizens including persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups of people.

As regard education, Article 45 of the Constitution of India on the Directive Principles of State Policy states “the State to provide free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.” The Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 goes a step further and desires provision of free education to children with disabilities till the age of 18 years. Thus the Constitution of India has duly recognized provision of education to all children including those with disabilities.



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Education of Children of Disabilities - a Legislative Mandate:

Education for all has long been one of the cherished goals of national development reflected both in constitutional and policy commitments since independence. Despite planned concerted efforts this goal remains elusive due to certain 'disadvantaged' groups remaining out of the fold of the formal educational system. One such group is the 'disabled' who have unconsidered peripheral for almost four decades of planned development. It is obvious that Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) cannot be achieved unless all children are brought into schools, retained and provided quality education that is equitable. The Section 26 of the PwD Act mandates that the Appropriate Government and the Local Authorities shall ensure free access to all children with disabilities. This provision of the Act has been further validated in



numerous judgments of the High Courts and Supreme Court. The Section 39 of the Act goes a step further and mandates 3 % reservation in all educational institutes run or aided by the Government. The Right to Education, 2009 further validates concept of free and compulsory education to all children between 6 to 14 years of age.

Integrated Education of Disabled Children was introduced by the MSJ&E during 1978. It was expanded during 1981 and modified during 1987, 1990 and 1992. The Scheme was shifted to the MHRD during 1986 in view of the National Policy on Education, 1986. It is pertinent to mention that this Scheme as per paragraph 12.2 is primary as well as secondary level of education. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is promoting elementary education of all children makes explicit provision for promoting education of all children with disabilities including children with mental retardation.

Right to Education: Right to Education occupies a central place in human right law. The Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education Act has come from, April 1, 2010. As from this day the right to education accorded the same legal status as the right to life, be provided Eight years of elementary education in an age appropriate classroom in the vicinity of his/her neighborhood. No child shall be denied admission for want of documents; no child shall be turned away if the admission cycle in the school is over and no child shall be asked to take an admission test. Children with special needs will also be educated in the mainstream schools. Our County has taken a bold initiative of including children with disabilities under the RTE through Right to Education of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2012 by inserting the term "a child with disability" in the definition of "Child" in Section 2 (d) of the RTE Act. All provisions of the Act become applicable to children with disabilities without any exception.

The Ministry has done away with the upper of 14 years under age of eligibility for coverage of children with disabilities under the Act by substituting new clause "...till the completion of elementary education". This would enable children with disabilities to continue in the school till the completion of elementary education. The amendment to RTE Act very smartly validates all the provision of Persons with Disabilities Act applicable in respect of free and compulsory education of children with disabilities. In this way, amendment to RTE Act supports relevant provision of PwD Act.



The amendment to RTE Act has nicely recognized specific needs of persons with severe disabilities as well as multiple disabilities. The amendment also enables such special need children to opt for Home Based Education. It is pertinent to mention that this provision mentions "... may also have the right to opt for home-based education". This means that such child can opt for mainstream or regular education and at the same time has right to opt for home-based education. Thus right to home-based education is optional and does not prevent such a child to pursue his or her education in a neighborhood school.

Special School covered under RTE

RTE Act defines school as "any recognized school imparting elementary education and includes a school belonging to specified category".

By implication this definition means that even a special school for any category of disability which is recognized and that imparts elementary education is also a "school" as per definition adopted in RTE Act and gets covered under Act.

The role of society as a cradle for human life from birth till death applies universally, cutting across all manmade barriers including prejudice and ignorance. Perhaps no other section of society requires as much nurturance as the disabled children and their families, often steeped in fallacies and superstitions and fear of exceptionality. In order to enhance and intensify the process of integration of the disabled children into the community, it is strongly felt that the persons who are primarily affected by the disability, such as parents, siblings and other family members, must be made an active part of this crusade.

Education For Whom

Ensuring the inclusion of children and youth with disabilities in all available mainstream educational settings by providing them with learning environment that is available, accessible, affordable and appropriate to help develop their learning and abilities.

Children with special needs are unique individuals. Their uniqueness may be noticed in one or more of following dimensions: vision, hearing, movement, communication, perpetual-motor, social emotional intelligence and adaptive behaviour : consequently these children can be classified into following type :

- **Locomotor Disability:** Disability of the bones and joints muscles leading to substantial restriction of the movement of the limbs or any form of cerebral palsy.



- **Visual impairment:** Blindness in a condition where a person suffers from any of following conditions, namely:
 - (i). Total absence of sight; or
 - (ii). Visual activity not exceeding 6/60 or 20/200 (Snellon) in the better eye with correcting lenses; or
 - (iii). Limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of 20 degrees or worse.A person with low vision (Partially sighted) is a person with impairment of visual functioning even after treatment or standard refractive correction but who's or is potentially capable of using vision for planning or execution of task with appropriate assistive device.
- **Hearing Impairment:** Means loss of sixty decibels or more in the better ear in the conversational range of frequencies.
- **Mental Retardation:** Means a condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind of a person which is specially characterized by sub normally of intelligence.
- **Cerebral Palsy:** Cerebral Palsy is caused by damage to the brain. It is a non-progressive disorder (that is, it does not become progressively more debilitating) that affects gross and fine motor co-ordination it is often associated with convulsions, speech disorders, hearing effects, vision problems, deficits in intellectual abilities, or combination of these problems. C.P. has been defined as a condition characterized by paralysis, weakness in coordination, and/or other motor dysfunctions because of damage to the child's brain it has matured.
- **Attention Deficit Disorder:** Children with attention deficit disorder are described as overactive, restless, impulsive, inattentive, distractible, easily frustrated, aggressive and unpredictable. Attention deficit disorders occur in association with learning disabilities. According to American Psychiatric Association (1987), children with attention deficit/hyperactive disorder have attention problems and hyper activity and impulsivity.
- **Autism:** Autism means a developmental disability, which significantly affects verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before the age of three that adversely affects educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to



environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory behavioral disorder”.

- **Learning disability:** Specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, read or write or do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, and minimal brain dysfunction and dyslexia and development aphasia. The term does not includes who have learning problems, which are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor handicaps of mental retardation or emotional disturbance, or of environment, cultural or economic disadvantage.
- **Multiple disability:** Multiple disability means concomitant impairment (such as mental handicap-visual impairment, mental handicap orthopedic impairment etc) the combination of which causes such severe developmental or educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments.

P.C. Biswas has beautifully elaborated the meaning of inclusion in his book “Inclusive Education” as follows

I- Involvement

N- No discrimination

C- Collaboration

L- Leveling

U-Universal Design

S- Synergy

I – Improvisation

O- Open-ness

N- Novuum organon

“Children who learn together, learn to live together”(by Els Heijnen)

Inclusion means:

- Inclusion is a process
- Integration is a matter of location.
- Integration is not inclusion.



- The participation of all pupils in the curriculum and the social life of the school–Action Programmed.
- “The intentional building of relationships where difference is welcomed and all benefit”.
- Providing services and support that parents and children with disabilities need in order to be in normal settings.
- Supporting regular education teachers and administrators.
- Having children with disabilities follow the same schedule as other children.
- Encouraging friendships between children with disabilities and their classmates/peers without disabilities.
- Teachers and administrators taking these concerns seriously.
- Teaching ALL children to understand and accept differences.

(UNESCO- at the UN-Committee on Rights of Child October 6, 1997- Centre for Human Rights, Geneva).

Research area in Inclusive Education under RTE

- ❖ Status of Development of Professionals in Inclusive Education
- ❖ Need of Training of Teachers in Inclusive Education
- ❖ Early Identification and Assessment and observation
- ❖ Individual Need Based Devices/ teaching/ planning
- ❖ Compilation and analysis of demographic patters for Inclusion
- ❖ Inter - Ministerial Coordination of functionaries of departments
- ❖ Mainstreaming inclusive education with Society
- ❖ Inclusion within Current and New Initiatives across the world
- ❖ Convergence of all children under the RTE
- ❖ Consolidation previous initiatives and new framework for future
- ❖ Analysis of Quality Indicators for monitoring Inclusive education
- ❖ Recognition challenges in inclusive education
- ❖ Teaching learning Environment
- ❖ Leadership and management
- ❖ Human Resource Support
- ❖ Safety and Health



- ❖ Addressing diversity
- ❖ Resource support
- ❖ Teaching learning materials
- ❖ ICT
- ❖ Accessibility Braille, Large Print or audio format, sign
- ❖ Social and psychological barriers in inclusion (Advisory Groups, Nodal Officers, Reporting Formats, Learning Models, Model Schools)
- ❖ curriculum for teacher training to include component of disability and specific needs of CwD

Conclusion: Every child born in the country-whether challenged or otherwise-is born with same right of education. It is obligation of the civil society and educational administration to ensure that every child a place in the broad framework of education. The educational provision for children with special needs (CWSN) is important factor in our way to achieve education for all. The history of mankind gives a clear evidence of the efforts to ensure respect for the dignity of human beings. At the international and national levels, many efforts have been made to eradicate all forms of inequality amongst human beings and providing opportunity to realize their rights in equal terms. So research in inclusive education will surely uplift the quality.

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