



Embracing diversity in ASIA through the adoption of Inclusive Open Practices

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WP2 – Development

**D2.1c – Advancing Inclusive Education: A Comprehensive Analysis of Current Policies
and Their Impact in India – An IITB Viewpoint**

A White Paper

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Edited and Compiled by NTU

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Current State of Policies of Inclusion in India and their Impact

Introduction

"I do not like the world as it is; so I am trying to make it a little more as I want it." —Helen Keller

The Indian educational ecosystem is riddled with challenges for inclusion as Indian social order operates largely on the lines of exclusion, based on historic colonization and internal colonization. The long-term effects of skewed power relations between the colonizer and the colonized have stripped many communities of their existential rights e. g. people belonging to non-binary gender identities and same-sex relations were outlawed by colonial laws until the Supreme Court of India affirmed constitutional rights of transgender persons and decriminalized same-sex relations in 2014 and 2018 respectively. As a post-colony of the British empire, efforts at decolonization are being pursued on many frontiers including disability rights, mental health rights, and gay rights which have a bearing on inclusive education.

Apart from colonization, Indian society presents another phenomenon called internal colonization where socio-politico-economic power concentrated in certain dominant communities has denied equal opportunities and barrier-free environments to weaker sections. Lower castes or outcaste (Dalits/Tribals) face exclusion and violence. Communalism and ethnic conflicts have reconfigured the political landscape in recent times. Failure to provide a safe and inclusive environment for children leads to cascading effects such as absenteeism, cognitive decline, and (mental) health problems at places of learning.

Often evolution of law precedes fierce movements. Laws don't come out in the vacuum. e.g. in the case of disability rights, many disabilities are not specifically mentioned in the revised Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 which increased the number from 6 to 21. Disability is a cultural concept too. Gluten intolerance is considered to be a disability in some countries and diabetes in some others.

Activists and scholars have foregrounded the need for policies and programmes that consider the intersecting social locations like caste, class, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, and psychosocial disability that aggravate the experience of inclusion. Nevertheless, India's inclusion landscape is dominated by disability inclusion narratives which are also of recent origin.

This report compiles existing constitutional provisions, laws, public policies, and programs that have a bearing on the importance of inclusive education in India, emphasizing the need to provide equal opportunities for all children, including those with special needs, to equally learn and participate in the educational system.

The discussions following are broadly divided into three sections: policies developed by the Government of India, policies developed by non-governmental organisations and a review of research on inclusive education.

State Policies

The Constitution of India supports the right to education for all citizens, including children with disabilities, and mentions the 86th Amendment Act of 2002, which made education a fundamental right for children aged 6-14 years. The Kothari Commission in 1964-66 stressed the importance of a common school system open to all children, irrespective of their backgrounds. The National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986 aimed to integrate children with disabilities into mainstream education and provided guidelines for achieving this goal. The Integrated Education of Disabled Children (IEDC) scheme launched in 1974 laid emphasis on integrating children with disabilities into regular schools. The Rehabilitation Council of India Act 1992 standardized the training of professionals in the field of rehabilitation including clinical psychology and special education. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act, 1995 ensured free education for children with disabilities up to the age of 18 and also envisioned the integration of students with disabilities into mainstream schools. The National Trust Act of 1999, though not directly related to education, focuses on creating barrier-free environments and promoting independence for persons with disabilities. The Project for Integrated Education for the Disabled (PIED), the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) were envisaged to provide educational opportunities and support services for children with special needs. The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (2006) emphasizes the importance of mainstreaming persons with disabilities in the general education system through inclusive education. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act) makes education a fundamental right for children aged 6-14 years and mandates private schools to admit a percentage of children from disadvantaged groups, including children with disabilities.

1. The report titled 'Disability-Inclusive Education Practices in India' emphasizes the importance of Inclusive Education for children with disabilities. It lists several policies by the Govt. of India in this regard. The report consists of age-related data on children with disabilities. The report highlights the importance of inclusive leadership and management in the education system, with a focus on supportive legislation and policies. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) emphasizes enabling children with disabilities to participate fully in the regular schooling process and provides directives for creating disability-inclusive learning environments. It proposes a cluster-based school structure to enhance coordination, leadership, governance, and resource-sharing among schools, potentially benefiting children with disabilities.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, is the most recent legislation, aligned with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). It emphasizes inclusive education, accessibility, and various measures to support persons with disabilities. It defines inclusive education as a system where students with and without disabilities learn together, guiding leaders within the education system to align their roles with this definition.

The report consists of a list of Government units responsible for disability-inclusive education. Raising awareness of their rights, advocating for inclusive services, changing attitudes and behaviours, and promoting education participation through community involvement, partnerships, and effective systems are the key strategies to empower children with disabilities and their families. UNICEF India's strategy for ending violence against children has three focus areas:

- 1) creating an enabling environment for multisectoral response,
- 2) systems-strengthening across justice/law enforcement, social service, education and health sectors, and
- 3). social behavioural change communication and adolescent and youth empowerment.

Integrated Education for Disabled Children, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Inclusive Education of the Disabled at Secondary Stage and the School Readiness Programme Centres (SRPCs) in Karnataka are some of the approaches to educate children with disabilities. Additional points discussed are education workforce development and teacher training; school environment and infrastructure; curriculum, pedagogy and assessment; learning materials; support services for students, parents and teachers.

2. Cross-cutting issues

Two cross-cutting issues in education in India are gender and COVID-19 responses.

Gender: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) improved girls' access to education through the 'no rejection policy' which provides subsidized universal education for children aged 6-14. Initiatives focus on mainstreaming gender issues in education, infrastructure development, and scholarship schemes for girls with disabilities. The Gender Inclusion Fund supports equitable quality education for girls and transgender students by provisioning sanitation facilities, cash transfers, boarding facilities, transportation, and curriculum enhancements for girls' education.

Nevertheless, efforts to prevent attrition of girls from schools need to be focused, especially for children with disabilities. Quality of education need to be improved, including capacity-building for teacher education institutions and curriculum reform.

COVID-19 Responses: The Ministry of Education (MoE) initiated various measures to ensure equal access to education during the pandemic which disrupted traditional face-to-face education in India like the SWAYAM platform for online courses, PM eVIDYA initiative to unify digital/online/on-air education efforts and Digital infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA). Special e-content for visually and hearing-impaired students was developed in addition to Educational TV channels, radio, and community radio which were

used extensively. Curriculum-based audio programs were created for Classes 1-8 under the 'Dhwanisala' series, and 'Umang' provided enrichment programs covering various subjects and global topics.

The report (UNICEF, 2021) concludes with some key recommendations.

- **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT**
 1. Prioritize the adoption of standard criteria in data collection.
 2. Review legislation to ensure alignment to promote inclusive education.
 3. Establish a cross-sectoral committee to implement inclusive education.
 4. Ensure that knowledge, skills and attitudes for inclusive education are embedded in the national professional standards for teachers.
 5. Review pre-service and in-service teacher training.
 6. Develop a professional development strategic plan.
 7. Establish clear transition mechanisms in educational levels.
 8. Ensure that data being collected include factors supporting inclusive education.
 9. Develop and integrate inclusive education standards into school quality standards.
 10. Assess monitoring and evaluation systems in developing inclusive education.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS**
 1. Support professional development initiatives.
 2. Advocate inclusive education and discontinuation of segregated provisions.
 3. Develop a strong communication strategy.
 4. Support referral mechanisms.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**
 1. Assess the sustainable implementation of policies supporting inclusive education.
 2. Conduct research on knowledge, attitudes and beliefs on disability and inclusion.
 3. Review professional development programmes for school leaders.
 4. Assess the gaps in skills and competencies in teacher education.

3. Handbook of Inclusive Education

The book titled "Inclusion: Equitable Education" covers various aspects related to inclusive education and disability rights. The book explains the concept of inclusion in education in terms of disability, impairment, and handicap as well as debunking common myths and highlighting the benefits of inclusion. The hallmarks of an inclusive school and the steps to make a school inclusive, including the role of school leaders, vision and mission, school culture, teacher training, vocational education, counselling, involving parents, and special educators are discussed. Attitudinal restructuring and evaluating for inclusion-readiness are also highlighted.

The role of teachers and parents in early identification of students with disabilities and some of the referral and assessment processes re described. Disability has been discussed from international and national perspectives from a rights-based perspective. Creating a Barrier-Free Environment that involves infrastructural modifications, transportation accessibility, information and communication accessibility, and access to school resources are pointed out. Further, curriculum planning, teaching methods, and assessment techniques in

inclusive education are discussed along with concepts of multiple intelligence and buddy system in the teaching-learning process.

The creation of lesson plans and individual education plans for students with disabilities, use of assistive technology and teaching aids, sensory integration, life skills, provision of disability certificates and other government concessions and continuing education in emergency are explored.

4. National Policy for Persons with Disabilities

The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities in India (NPPDI) highlights various aspects related to disability rights, prevention, rehabilitation, and empowerment. It begins by emphasizing the importance of equal opportunities, protection of rights, and full participation for individuals with disabilities. The article mentions that India had 21.9 million persons with disabilities in 2001, accounting for 2.13 percent of the total population. While there have been positive changes in society's perception of persons with disabilities, significant challenges remain, such as limited literacy rates (49 percent) and unemployment (34 percent).

The NPPDI emphasizes prevention programs, awareness campaigns, and measures to prevent disabilities during pregnancy and afterward. Physical rehabilitation, educational rehabilitation, and economic rehabilitation are three major areas identified.

Children with disabilities up to the age of 18 are offered free and compulsory education. Economic Rehabilitation in terms of promoting wage employment, self-employment, and vocational training for persons with disabilities is a focus. Women with disabilities are provided education, employment, and rehabilitation. Public buildings and transportation systems are made accessible and barrier free for persons with disabilities. Providing financial support to persons with disabilities and their families ensures social security. The role of NGOs in providing services and support to persons with disabilities is recognized. Supporting research related to disabilities, their causes, and interventions to improve the quality of life is highlighted. It also covers participation of persons with disabilities in sports, recreation, and cultural activities as a focus.

Amendments to Existing Acts: Considering amendments to existing disability-related acts based on experience and developments in the sector.

Key laws enacted by the Parliament related to disabilities in India are the Persons with Disability (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, the National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disability Act, 1999 and the Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992. Infrastructure development includes seven national institutes and various rehabilitation centres and services across India.

5. Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs

Inclusive education for children with special needs (CWSN) is a vital part of Samagra Shiksha, focusing on various activities such as identification and assessment of CWSN, provision of aids, corrective surgeries, assistive devices, teaching materials, and teacher training. The Right to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 allows for home-based education for children with severe/multiple disabilities. The program seeks to enhance stipends for girls with special needs to encourage enrolment and retention.

Various government departments and authorities are working to ensure that educational institutions provide inclusive education by eliminating discrimination, making facilities accessible, and offering necessary support. Inclusive learning materials, such as "Barkha: A Reading Series for 'All,'" designed based on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles is also available digitally. A handbook has been developed to raise awareness about including children with autism in primary classrooms, providing guidance and strategies for regular teachers.

6. Thematic Report - Social Inclusion

This report provides an in-depth analysis of social inclusion, particularly focusing on the Role of Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) and Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan in various government schemes in India. It is divided into several sections.

The Sectoral Evaluation Perspective part of the report evaluates the impact of social inclusion components in various sectors, including agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, women & child development, health, urban transformation, human resources development, and social inclusion and justice delivery. The report has highlighted gaps in the interventions and budgetary allocations in different sectors and recommends improving social inclusion in government schemes. It emphasizes the importance of social inclusion in reducing poverty and promoting inclusive growth.

7. Status of Disabilities in India - A Review of Policy, Schemes and Facts on Disability

Despite the intent and legislation of RPWD Act, the article highlights that there have been shortcomings in improving the quality of life for PWDs in India. It suggests that intent without conviction often fails to translate into meaningful action. Despite the positive changes introduced by the RPWD Act, its impact has been less than desirable due to a lack of adherence and compliance at the state and city levels. The 2011 Census remains limited in its scope and may not represent the full extent of disability-related issues in the country. The National Sample Survey (NSS) conducted by the National Statistical Office in 2018 aimed to provide more detailed insights into disability-related factors, including the incidence and prevalence of disabilities, causes, access to facilities, and out-of-pocket expenses.

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Policies Developed by NGOs (e.g. UNESCO and UNICEF)

1. India Inclusion, Education Profiles

The report titled “India Inclusion, Education Profiles” discusses various aspects of education in India, with a particular focus on inclusive education and the rights of different groups within the education system. It highlights the 2016 Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act's definition of inclusive education and the challenges in its implementation across different states. The report notes that despite legal provisions, many children with disabilities still face barriers to access education. The article discusses the efforts of some states, such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan, to promote inclusive education through residential bridge courses and the importance of transitioning learners from special schools to regular schools when ready. It also addresses issues related to gender equality in education and the provisions for girls, transgender children, and other vulnerable groups. The report emphasizes the need for accessible infrastructure, inclusive curriculum, and trained teachers to support inclusive education. It mentions the role of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in teacher training and the challenges of ensuring that schools adhere to inclusive practices. Monitoring and reporting mechanisms are discussed, with a focus on data collection and evaluation of the effectiveness of the education system, particularly in terms of inclusive education.



2. Inclusive Education in India

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD Act) and the Right to Education Act (RTE Act) emphasize the right to education for children with disabilities but provide multiple pathways, including special schools, integrated classes, inclusive schools, and home-based education. However, there are concerns about the inclusivity of public schools, leading to the exclusion of children with disabilities. A few statistics on the enrolment of children with disabilities and the lack of standardized norms and standards for their education are provided. The gaps and challenges include issues related to inclusive education, the lack of specific provisions for children with disabilities, and disparities in funding and quality of education. The section also talks about the educational situation for various marginalized groups, including SCs, STs, Muslims, and linguistic minorities. It addresses issues such as access to education, scholarships, infrastructure, and medium of instruction. Furthermore, the section touches on the challenges faced by children in rural and remote areas, such as long travel distances to schools and the impact of school rationalization on access to education. The economic disparities in education and the need for financial support for disadvantaged students are also highlighted. There are also vulnerable groups, including trafficked children, street children, child victims of substance abuse, and migrants. The report also discusses the efforts made to ensure their access to education.

Governance and Inclusive Education:

Education in India is a shared responsibility between the central government and the states. While states contribute most of the funds for education, the central government sets the national policy direction. The Ministry of Education oversees education at the national level, while state education departments manage it at the state level. Key education programs include Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, which focuses on overall education, and initiatives like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao for girls' education, modernizing madrasas, and teacher training. Different states also have their own education schemes. Various ministries handle specific aspects like early childhood education, disability education, tribal education, and vocational education. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights monitors the Right to Education (RTE) and children's rights. The National Council for Teacher Education manages teacher education, and the National Council for Education Research and Training develops curricula and textbooks. Local bodies like panchayati raj institutions and urban local bodies play a role in improving school access. NITI Aayog coordinates policymaking, while civil society and NGOs support inclusive education. The Central Advisory Board of Education advises on education matters, and horizontal and vertical coordination is maintained through committees and parliamentary oversight. Despite progress in enrolment, there are still education disparities among states. Specific inclusive education policies have been introduced in some states, including early interventions for children with disabilities, transgender welfare boards, initiatives for girls' education, tribal language programs, migrant education, and efforts to reach out-of-school children. Many of these practices have been successful and offer hope for inclusive education in India.



Learning Environments

The PWD Act 2016 forms the basis for disability- inclusive education in India, requiring government-funded or recognized educational institutions to provide inclusive education to children with disabilities. This includes accessible facilities, individualized support, early detection of learning disabilities, transportation, and more. The government is also responsible for conducting surveys to identify children with disabilities, training teachers, providing assistive devices, modifying the curriculum and examination system, and offering scholarships. Infrastructure improvements, including accessibility for persons with disabilities, are part of the Accessible India Campaign. Schools must ensure accessible premises, and this accessibility is assessed by authorized access auditors. The Right to Education Act mandates ramps and disabled-friendly toilets in schools, along with special teaching material and sensitized teachers. The National Curriculum Framework 2005 emphasizes child-centred education but does not fully mainstream the education of children with disabilities. It also highlights the need for empowering girls, marginalized communities, and preserving tribal traditions, knowledge, and languages. The PWD Act obligates the government to provide free learning materials and assistive devices to students with benchmark disabilities up to the age of eighteen, although delays in availability are common. Efforts are made to develop materials in local dialects and tribal languages, but gender audits reveal lingering stereotypes in textbooks. Technology, including assistive devices and digital resources, is recognized as essential for inclusive education. However, the availability of such devices in schools is limited, with only a small percentage of schools having functional computers.

Teachers and Support Personnel

In India, both pre-service and in-service training are expected for new teachers, with the focus on inclusive education intensifying after the introduction of the RTE Act. The current pre-service teacher training course, B.Ed., includes a paper on "Education of children with special needs" to prepare teachers in identifying and addressing disabilities. There are specialized courses in special education recognized by the Rehabilitation Council of India and the National Council for Teacher Education. However, the actual training received by teachers is often shorter, with millions of teachers participating in 2 to 5 day orientation programs on inclusive education. Training covers areas like infrastructure, pedagogy, assistive devices, and teaching materials. Itinerant special educators play a crucial role in providing support to schools, but their training may be limited to one disability type.

Private schools are required by the CBSE to appoint special educators, but compliance varies. There are standards for special educators in mainstream settings, but not for special schools, which often have a range of education personnel, including therapists and counsellors. Teacher training also includes elements of social inclusion and gender sensitivity, but shortages of trained teachers and a backlog of untrained teachers present challenges. India faces a shortage of about 1 million general teachers, and nearly 20% of teachers lack professional qualifications. Teacher support mechanisms like Cluster and Block Resource Centres are established, and Nodal Officers are designated to assist with the admission and facilities for children with disabilities in schools. Diversity in teacher recruitment is considered, with statutory reservations for marginalized groups in government teaching positions. There is a 3% reservation for Persons with Disabilities

(PwDs) in government schools, along with quotas for women, Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Teachers with disabilities can bring unique insights into accommodating learners with disabilities.

Monitoring and Reporting

In India, the responsibility for maintaining data on the quality of education lies with the appropriate government bodies. Local self-governance bodies and School Management Committees, with a focus on women's representation and marginalized groups, also play a role in local oversight. The data collection process includes both qualitative and quantitative aspects. Quantitative data is sourced from various outlets, including the Census of India, National Sample Surveys, and administrative databases such as the UDISE database, All-India School Education Surveys, and the National Achievement Survey. The Ministry of Women and Child Development's Management Information Systems provide information on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). Supplementary studies are conducted as needed, such as those focused on out-of-school children. However, challenges exist in the monitoring process. School visits are a primary method of monitoring, but resource constraints, including financial and human resources, hinder effective coverage. Inadequate training of officials further compounds the issue. While an Index for Developing Inclusive Schools developed by NCERT offers useful indicators for inclusion, it is underutilized. Existing indicators for measuring inclusive education are limited, with a predominant focus on access, retention, infrastructure, learning, and teacher composition. Metrics like Shaala Sidhi, the MHRD's Performance Grading Index, and the School Education Quality Index partially cover aspects of inclusive education but have limitations in their comprehensive evaluation. Additional indicators related to classroom language use, out-of-pocket education expenses, and other factors are collected less frequently, often once in a decade through the Census.

Overview of main studies of inclusive education policy at federal or selected state levels

The field of inclusive education in India faces several challenges, including limited comprehensive studies, a focus on disability rather than a holistic perspective, and changing education policies. Available evidence sources for inclusive education in India include official statistics, policy datasets, education reports, state-specific studies, government documents, and research on social exclusion. The literature on social exclusion also sheds light on the challenges faced by marginalized groups in education, such as Dalits, Adivasis, religious minorities, and girls. Some research focuses on discrimination in schools and the implementation of Section 12-1c under the RTE Act, which provides reservations for marginalized children in private schools, highlighting regulatory issues and discrimination concerns.

Key challenges for effective inclusive education policy implementation

The challenges to implementing inclusive education policies in India are multifaceted. They encompass issues related to legal and policy provisions, implementation capacity, resource availability, teacher preparedness, and prevailing attitudes. Legal and policy frameworks are outdated and not aligned with current understanding, leading to



temporary misalignment between policies, programs, and practices due to ongoing policy changes. The lack of notified rules for progressive legislation hinders its enforcement in several states.

The delivery models often support the creation of separate, non-inclusive schools for marginalized communities instead of strengthening local government schools. Implementation capacity is hampered by limited knowledge of provisions, weak enforcement and grievance redress systems, and inadequate monitoring and supervision mechanisms. Resource constraints result in poor infrastructure, delayed adaptations for children with disabilities, and insufficient materials and staff. Teachers are in short supply, especially special educators, and training capacity needs improvement. Attitudes toward marginalized communities and persons with disabilities often include low expectations and a preference for academic results over inclusion and equity agendas. Overall, there is a lack of faith in inclusive education, with occasional support for special schools over inclusive education from the highest court.

A hope for the future

Despite the challenges outlined, the past two decades have witnessed a notable increase in school enrolment, driven by positive legislation, specific provisions for inclusion, and broader social change. While more work remains to be done to make education systems fully inclusive, there has been undeniable progress, offering hope for further positive changes. Recent policy shifts, such as a greater emphasis on early childhood and secondary education, hold the potential to extend the right to education to all children, not just those aged 6-14. States that have introduced successful inclusive education policies share some common factors, including a commitment to invest in education, political mobilization by marginalized groups, efforts to enhance technical capacity, and political will. States with higher budget allocations for education, especially inclusive education, have the capacity to innovate and strengthen the system. Mobilization and advocacy by marginalized communities, technical support, and political commitment all play crucial roles in improving inclusive education provisions. Ultimately, political will at the state level can lead to significant improvements in the quality and equity of education.

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Review of Policies of Inclusive Education by Researchers

1. Title: Inclusive Education: Meaning, Concept & Objectives

Sahani, R.S., and Patel, H.B. (2023) discuss the concept and importance of inclusive education in addressing the educational needs of all children, including those with disabilities. Inclusive education is presented as a philosophy which believes that all learners, regardless of disabilities or differences, have the right to be educated together in age-appropriate class groups within regular community schools. The key principles and objectives of inclusive education are outlined. It emphasizes the importance of equal educational opportunities for all children, the protection of rights, identification of individual skills, development of social consciousness, preparation for new challenges, and the promotion of a sense of peer acceptance among students. Inclusive education also aims to improve the quality of education, remove discrimination, and create a learning environment that recognizes the diversity of students' needs and abilities. The article also discusses the role of teachers in inclusive classrooms. Teachers are expected to interact with parents, solve problems, develop new learning strategies, provide special facilities, cater to personal needs, recognize hidden talents, and promote a positive attitude among differently able children. The ultimate goal is to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment where every student can thrive. In conclusion, inclusive education is seen as a powerful tool for creating effective classrooms and promoting diversity, tolerance, and equal opportunities in education. It not only benefits children with disabilities but also enriches the learning experience for all students. By embracing inclusive education, a society can better prepare children to face the challenges of the real world and contribute positively to their communities.

2. Title: Inclusive education and education policies in India: An overview

Karan, B., and Chakma, C. (2022) discuss the concept of inclusive education. It traces the history of inclusive education in India through various national education policies, notably, the National Policy on Education (NPE) of 1968. The article highlights the recent National Education Policy of 2020 (NEP 2020), which directly integrates the term "inclusive education" into its framework. NEP 2020 envisions an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all children. It recognizes the importance of inclusion and equitable education, addressing factors such as prejudice, bias, and the special needs of learners. The policy emphasizes the removal of social gaps in access and participation in education, especially for disadvantaged groups. NEP 2020 calls for a new school culture that sensitizes students, teachers, and administrators to the needs of all learners and integrates human values such as respect, empathy, and justice into the

curriculum. In conclusion, the article highlights India's efforts to promote inclusive education through its national education policies.

3. Title: Inclusive education in India – concept, need and challenges

Singh, J.D. (2016) discusses the concept and the historical background of inclusive education in India. The article highlights how government initiatives in this area have evolved over the years, with a focus on integrating children with disabilities into mainstream schools. The importance of inclusive education is emphasized in the context of international declarations and conventions, such as the Salamanca Statement in 1994, which led to the reformulation of policies in many developing countries to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream schools. Inclusive education can help to maximize the potential of students, and ensure their rights, and is considered the preferred educational approach for the 21st century. The article discusses the challenges faced in implementing inclusive education in India, including the large population of disabled individuals, scarcity of resources, negative attitudes, inadequate teacher training, and the need for accessible infrastructure. It also highlights the importance of overcoming these challenges to build a strong system for inclusive education. Several measures are proposed to improve the implementation of inclusive education in India, including the need for inclusive policies, teacher training, infrastructure development, and support services. The article emphasizes the importance of involving parents, creating flexible systems, and providing necessary resources to ensure the success of inclusive education.

4. Title: Inclusive education in India: Are the teachers prepared?

Das, A.K. et al. (2013) discuss the state of education for children with disabilities in India and the impact of legislation on their inclusion in mainstream schools. It highlights the significance of The Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Act, 1995, which aimed to ensure the full participation and non-discrimination of students with disabilities in regular schools. This legislation encouraged a shift from separate special education to inclusive education, aligning with international concepts of social justice, equity, and school effectiveness. The article mentions the inadequacies in implementing the provisions of the PWD Act including teacher training for inclusive education. Some studies showed that teachers lacked training and faced challenges in effectively implementing inclusive practices. The article also discusses concerns and barriers related to inclusive education, including attitudes of teachers and parents, logistical challenges, and the need for clarity in the conditions of providing services. Furthermore, the PWD Act stressed the need for regular school teachers to take on new roles and responsibilities in educating students with disabilities. They would need to possess appropriate attitudes, knowledge, and skills, including understanding the learning characteristics of students with disabilities and adapting instruction accordingly. The article mentions the Council for Exceptional Children which developed and validated a common core of essential knowledge and skills for professional practice in special education. It suggests various instructional strategies and teaching approaches, such as peer tutoring, cooperative learning, and individualized instruction, to facilitate the learning of

students with special needs. The study conducted by the authors focuses on primary and secondary school teachers in Delhi, India. It reveals that a significant percentage of teachers had not received training in special education, lacked experience in teaching students with disabilities, and had limited access to support services in their schools. Consequently, teachers rated themselves as not competent in the competencies related to inclusive education. The article suggests several recommendations for improving the education of students with disabilities in India. These include the need for teacher training programs that align with the competencies required for inclusive education, ongoing professional development, a "train-the-trainer" model to reach a large teacher population, and the provision of support services in schools.

5. Title: Inclusive Education in India: Issues, Challenges and Prospects

Bhat, M.U.D., and Geelani, S.Z.A. (2017) deal with the importance of inclusion in the teaching process, particularly in the Indian context. It emphasizes that all students, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, attainment, or background, should have equal opportunities in education. Various issues and challenges within the inclusive education system in India are identified. Some of the challenges outlined include low enrolment rates for children with disabilities in mainstream education, a lack of teacher competencies and training, large class sizes, rigid curricula that do not cater to diverse needs, inadequate infrastructure and assistive devices, negative attitudes from parents and teachers, and a lack of political will to implement inclusive education effectively. The article suggests several methods to address these challenges, such as better policy execution, changing societal attitudes towards disabilities, increasing skill-based teaching, linking research with practice, and promoting peer coaching. According to the article inclusive education should aim to provide quality education to all learners, regardless of disabilities, and emphasizes the importance of participation from various stakeholders, including persons with disabilities and their families.

6. Title: Inclusive education in India: from concept to reality

Tuli, U. (2019) emphasizes the importance of providing education as a fundamental right for all children, including those with disabilities, and highlights the challenges faced in India. It discusses the prevalence of disability in the country and the need to address educational gaps, especially for girls and women with disabilities. The article also mentions the legislative framework and national policies aimed at inclusive education, emphasizing the shift towards a rights-based approach to support children with disabilities. The need for a barrier-free environment, both in terms of physical infrastructure and curriculum adaptations is underlined. Support services, such as specialized teaching methods and materials, are integral components of inclusive education. Teacher training plays a crucial role in equipping educators to address the diverse needs of students. The necessity of inclusion is underscored by the importance of fostering an inclusive society and preparing students for a world that values diversity. Inclusion extends beyond the classroom, encompassing sports

and cultural activities to promote holistic development. However, inclusive education in India faces various challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of trained teachers, and societal biases that need to be overcome to realize its full potential.

7. Title: Policies for Developing an Inclusive Education System: A Review

Bishnu, S. (2017) delves into the evolution of inclusive education, which seeks to provide children with disabilities or learning difficulties equal opportunities for education. It discusses international efforts, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, which emphasize inclusive education as a fundamental right. In India, constitutional provisions and policies like the Right to Education Act and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan support inclusive education. However, the article highlights the challenges in implementing these policies effectively and calls for collaboration between stakeholders to improve inclusive education practices.

8. Title: Policy and Reality: Inclusive Education in India

Bajpai, A., & Zahra, W. (2019) discuss inclusive education, which aims to educate children with special needs alongside regular students in the same classroom. It emphasizes on addressing the needs of physically, mentally, socially, and economically disadvantaged children, promoting equal opportunities, and providing necessary support services. The article traces the history of special education policies in India, from segregation to the promotion of inclusive education. It highlights various policies and acts introduced over the years and their impact on the education of children with disabilities. The article also acknowledges the challenges and shortcomings in policy implementation, such as insufficient training for teachers, inadequate infrastructure, and societal attitudes. It concludes by emphasizing the importance of a holistic and collaborative approach to make inclusive education policies successful, involving all stakeholders in the process.

9. Title: Present status of inclusive education in India

Ray, S., and Ghanta, B. (2022)] discuss the concept of inclusive education in India, giving its historical background and current status. Inclusive education is based on the idea that all children, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, should have equal access to education. The article emphasizes that every child in the country must be included in education to contribute to the nation's development. The article mentions the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE Act 2009) as a significant step toward achieving inclusive education in India. It also acknowledges the diversity among students and the importance of inclusivity in all sectors, particularly education. The historical background of inclusive education in India is divided into seven periods, reflecting the changing attitudes toward disability from exclusion to inclusion. The article discusses various government acts, policies, and programs related to inclusive education, such as the Mental Health Act (1987),

Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI-1992), Persons with Disabilities Act (PWD-1995), Right to Education Act (RTE-2009), and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD Act-2016). It also highlights national programs like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA-2001), Inclusive Education for the Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS-2009), and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA-2009). The article presents data from the 2011 Census of India, indicating that while progress has been made, there are still challenges in enrolling and retaining disabled children in educational institutions. It also notes gender differences in school attendance and academic performance between disabled and non-disabled students. The article suggests that while the government has introduced various regulations, acts, and schemes to promote inclusive education, its full success remains to be achieved. The need for awareness and collaboration among the government, teachers, and guardians to ensure that every child is included in education and treated with dignity and respect, without discrimination is emphasized.

10. Title: Policies and Practices for Inclusive Education in India

Ganeshan, M.K. & Vethirajan, C. (2022) discuss the concept of inclusive education in India, emphasizing the importance of providing equal educational opportunities to all children, regardless of their abilities. It traces the evolution of inclusive education in India, highlighting key policies and acts that have shaped the education landscape for children with disabilities. The policies and acts mentioned are the Persons with Disabilities Act of 1995, the Integrated Education of Disabled Children Act, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Education for All) program, and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2016. These policies aim to ensure that children with disabilities have access to quality education and are integrated into mainstream schools. Additionally, the New Education Policy 2020, which aims to make education universal from pre-school through secondary school is discussed. It emphasizes the importance of creating a more holistic, flexible, and inclusive education system. The article also highlights some good practices in the context of inclusive education in India, such as providing support services, teacher training, and inclusive curricula. It underlines the need for collaborative efforts among policymakers, educators, and parents to promote inclusivity in the education system. The article advocates for inclusive education as a fundamental human right and a way to promote the overall well-being and growth of society. It emphasizes the importance of creating an inclusive educational environment that accommodates the diversity of learners and ensures equal access to educational opportunities for all children, regardless of their abilities.

Recommendations

1. The inclusive education landscape is dominated by disability inclusion initiatives.
2. Intersectionality (how multiple dimensions and systems of inequality interact with one another and create distinct experiences and outcomes) needs to be considered in all inclusion initiatives.
3. Implementation of already existing affirmative laws needs to be strengthened.

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