

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **SECTION - A**

### **IMPORTANCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND STATUS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN INDIA**

#### **Importance of Inclusive Education (Background)**

For a long time those concerned with the field of education have been grappling with the serious question of what kind of education to provide for children especially in the context of varying and different abilities of the students. Traditionally education had come to be separated into two types, namely, general education and special education. Experts and authorities have been increasingly questioning for some time now if this was a correct approach to provide education in a situation where there were children with differing abilities. It had been believed earlier that children with differing needs and especially those with special needs must be given education separately. Owing to lack of knowledge, educational access and technology, disabled or challenged and disabled children were therefore initially segregated from other children. This had led to the rise of general schools on one hand and on the other, the establishment of 'Special Schools' for the disabled or the disabled. Since the last three decades this segregation in the education field has come under severe criticism and now a consensus has begun to emerge that instead of continuing with segregated education, inclusive education must be provided. Hence efforts have been made in this direction, particularly during last two decades. Thus in recent times there has been a shift towards having children with disabilities attend the same schools as non-

disabled children. The educationists now feel that each child should be allowed to learn in his own way along with his peer group.

Hence Inclusive Education came to be provided to the disabled students within the regular education system with some extra support (i.e. resource room, resource teacher etc.). The children with special educational needs now were allowed to get education along with regular students. Thus the concept of inclusion is about school system changes to improve the educational system for all students. It means changes in the curriculum, changes in how teachers teach and how students learn, as well as changes in how students with and without special needs interact with and relate to one another. Inclusive education therefore involves changing culture of contemporary schools with emphasis on active learning, applied curriculum, appropriate assessment methods, multi-level instructional approaches, and increased attention to diverse student needs and individualization. Inclusive Education is meant to make schools as centers of learning and educational systems as caring, nurturing, and supportive educational communities where the needs of all students are met in a true sense. Inclusive schools no longer provide "regular education" and "special education". Instead, inclusive schools provide an inclusive education and as a result all students are able to learn together. In other words, it is open to all students, and ensures that all students can learn and participate in a common situation and a common milieu. In short, Inclusive Education is a process of enabling all students, including previously excluded groups, to learn and participate effectively within mainstream school systems. Within the schools Inclusive Education is an approach which aims to develop a child-focus by acknowledging that all children are individuals with different learning needs and speeds and yet can be educated and trained without alienating them from their normal

peers. Teaching and learning is made more effective, relevant and fun for all. Inclusive Education is part of development, and development must always be inclusive, which means it must respond to the needs of real people who are all different. As with all children, disabled children too have a range of basic needs which need to be met in order for them to benefit from education and grow and blossom as members of the society.

The concept of an Inclusive Education is clearly a shift from the traditional welfare and service oriented practice of special/integrated education that is no longer appropriate or effective given the current agenda based on human rights. Inclusive Education is a relatively new concept, and is now recognized throughout the world. Inclusive Education in essence stands for equality, and accepts every child with his or her own unique capabilities. This notion is now being accepted by all the international, national and local educational programmes. Inclusion therefore entails the educational system making itself open and welcoming to all. As far as the inclusion of disabled children is concerned, there is a shift in outlook and the services from 'care of the disabled child' to 'education and personal development' of the child.

### **And Status of Inclusive Education in India**

Conference titled "Special Needs Education: Access and Quality" was held in Salamanca, Spain, in 1994. According to the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, Inclusive Education means "schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalised areas or groups." (para 3) It further

states that all governments have been urged to "adopt as a matter of law or policy, the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise". The basic thrust of this landmark Conference is that the existing regular schools should meet the educational needs of all children irrespective of their limitations and disabilities.

According to UNESCO the concept of Inclusive Education is that, “ ... it involves the admission of children with special educational needs in ‘ordinary’ or ‘regular’ schools and may be described as ‘pedagogic integration’. This may be mandatory under legislation, or it may take the form of statements of policy which aim to encourage such integration” (UNESCO 1996). The idea of Inclusive Education was again reiterated at the World Education Forum held at Dakar, Senegal in 2000 and came to be supported by the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities which proclaims participation and equality for all. The UN Standard Rules for Persons with Disabilities states that ‘States should recognize the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for children, youth and adults with disabilities in integrated settings. They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the educational system. General education authorities are responsible for the education of persons with disabilities in integrated settings. Education for persons with disabilities should form an integral part of national educational planning, curriculum development and school organization.’ It further adds that ‘Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the

majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.’ And yet further it says ‘... schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions.’ The issue of Inclusive Education featured prominently in 2004 at the UN Disability Convention. Over the years the concept of Inclusive Education has been catching on in most of the countries of the world. The advanced and western countries have been far ahead in implementation of Inclusive Education while the developing countries have tried to implement it but are struggling to overcome the many problems facing them in implementing effective Inclusive Education.

India has been committed to fulfilling the goal of education for all and ‘inclusive education’ is now a feature of various government documents and plans. However, between 35 and 80 million of India’s 200 million school age children do not attend school. In addition, fewer than five percent of children who have a disability are in school. India has over 80 million people with disabilities and many of them have been denied the education opportunity until recently. As per Census 2001, the literacy level of the disabled population is only 49 per cent. Literacy rates for the disabled female population are around 37 per cent as compared to the national average of over 54 per cent for the female population. Literacy rates for the disabled male population are 58.14 per cent as compared to 75.85 per cent for males. Inclusive education in India is seen by many as a matter of providing education for children with disabilities. UNICEF’s Report on the Status of Disability in India 2000 states that there are around 30 million children in India suffering from some form of disability. The Sixth All-India Educational Survey (NCERT, 1998) reports that of India’s 200 million school-aged children (6–14 years), 20

million require special needs education. While the national average for gross enrolment in school is over 90 per cent, less than five per cent of children with disabilities are in school. Government and NGOs have been initiating measures to review and plan appropriate strategies for special needs and for providing inclusive education.

The Indian Constitution through its directive principles requires the state to ensure provision of basic education to all children up to the age of 14 years. However the education of people with disabilities was not explicitly provided but the mind of the constitution was clear that 'free and compulsory education should be provided for all children until they complete the age of 14 years'.

The Kothari Commission, 1964–66 which was the first Education Commission addressed issues of access and participation by all. It stressed a common school system open to all children, irrespective of their caste, creed, community, religion, economic condition and social status. In 1968, the National Education Policy adopted the commission's recommendations and had suggested the expansion of educational facilities for physically and mentally handicapped children, and the development of an 'integrated programme' enabling handicapped children to study in regular schools. The Kothari Commission focused attention on the education of children with disabilities. This resulted in 1974, into a scheme for Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC). The new National Policy on Education (1986) focused on the 'removal of disparities' in education while also focusing on the specific needs of those who had been denied equality.

A project called Project Integrated Education (PIED) was introduced in 1987 by the National Council for Educational Research and Training

(NCERT), with financial support from the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and UNICEF. According to the NPE, “the indicators of integration are that handicapped people enjoy the same rights as the rest; have opportunities for growth and development in environmental conditions available to the rest; have access to the quality of life like any other citizen; and are treated as equal partners in the community.” The programme of action outlined measures to implement the policy including massive in-service training programmes for teachers; an orientation programme for administrators; the development of supervisory expertise in resource institutions for school education at the district and block level; and provision of incentives such as supply of aids, appliances, textbooks and school uniforms.

The World Declaration on ‘Education for All’ which was adopted in 1990 gave further boost to integrated education in India and the Rehabilitation Council of India Act 1992 initiated a training programme for the development of professionals to respond to the needs of students with disabilities. Also the NPE underwent modifications in 1992 and a Plan of Action was initiated which helped push Inclusive Education. The launch of the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was started in 1994 which provided further impetus to existing efforts. The enactment of the People with Disability Act of 1995 (also called Indian Disability Act) provided legislative support to Inclusive Education. This act makes it mandatory to provide free education to children with disabilities in an appropriate environment until the age of 18 years. In 1999, the government passed the National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act for the economic rehabilitation of people with disabilities. These acts have been instrumental in bringing about a perceptive

change/improvement in the attitude of government, NGOs and people with disabilities. In recent years, major initiatives had been launched by the government for achieving the goals of universalization of elementary education (UEE) especially the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in 2002. The goal had been to provide 'education for all' by 2010.

The Inclusive Education and inclusive schools have been operating in many parts of the country. Big cities like Delhi and Mumbai have made good advancement in implementing Inclusive Education. Also large states like Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala also have their own Inclusive Education programmes. There has been a trend towards starting Inclusive Education in various parts of India.

The impact of national policies has been gradually witnessed in Goa too. Goa is a state with very high per capita income, high literacy rate (over 82%) and good health care system. However Goa too has a share of its disabled and needs to provide these persons with differing abilities with education and training. Goa, a small state a population of 15 million people has several thousands of persons who are termed as disabled or disabledor challenged.

In Goa Inclusive Education has been a recent arrival. The first school that started a resource room was in the year 2003 (Holy Cross High School, Bastora, Goa). Subsequently three more schools with IE have been functioning in Goa, Chubby Cheeks, Spring Valley High School at Pilerne (2004), Jyot-Adarsh School at Margao (2006) and Lourdes Convent High School (2007). Presently around 13 schools are considered to be Inclusive Education schools. The number of disabled students in the four schools was 42 but now at the latest count it is reported that 676



differently challenged students are getting education in an inclusive education setup.. The Government of Goa under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has been sponsoring four more Resource Rooms in Goa –One each at Quepem, Bicholim, Verna and Margao during the previous two academic years and this figure has been going up. Hence, since 2008 there had been atleast eight Inclusive Education schools operating in Goa. The Social Welfare Department and the Education Department of Goa Government are the main nodal agencies and local NGOs like Sangath, Sethu and others are actively involved in spreading the concept and practice of IE in Goa.

However, the present education system in Goa is heavily oriented towards segregation with 14 special schools with 1015 student on one hand and on the other 2039 general schools at primary, middle and secondary with 2,13,625 students. Many of the disabled children especially in the rural and remote areas of the state are still not able to get education as the ‘special schools are mostly’ situated in the cities and the local general schools do not usually admit the children with disabilities. Hence the government of Goa had decided to push the idea of inclusive education since many disabled students are already studying in the general schools on account of several reasons.

**SECTION -B****CONCEPTS ABOUT MODE OF EDUCATION****CONCEPT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION****HISTORY OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION****Concepts about Mode of Education****Introduction**

It is well known fact that the purpose of education is to make sure that students of all abilities gain access to information, knowledge and skills which will prepare them to live their lives fruitfully by contributing both to their communities and also to their work places. Thus the main purpose of education becomes increasingly challenging as more and more schools begin to accommodate students with different abilities and backgrounds in the same teaching-learning setup. But as one strives to meet the challenge of inclusive education through the Education for All the many concepts that are related to the area of inclusive education required to be studied, analysed and understood to come to a clearer understanding of the concept of inclusive Education itself.

Over the last few decades the field of education has witnessed use of many concepts and terms which have often caused much confusion and even controversy. Some of these terms continue to be used in the context of emerging educational philosophy especially in the context of Education for All philosophy. The terms and concepts such as Segregated Education, Regular Education, Special Education, Special Needs Education, Education of the Disabled, Mainstream Education, Integrated Education and Inclusive education have become more important due to their direct bearing on Education Policies for the new millennium. In order to properly understand the concept of Inclusive Education it

becomes imperative to look at the meaning and import of the other related terms and concept such as Segregated Education, Regular Education, Special Education, Special Needs Education, Education of the Disabled, Mainstream Education and Integrated Education. Terms such as Disability, Impairment and Special therefore also gain significance in the context of Inclusive Education and merit atleast brief reference and explanation. Terms such as Impairment, Handicap, Disability, Mainstreaming, Integration and most importantly Inclusive merit attention and study.

The terms Impairment, Disability and Handicap are the terms that often crop in the discourse on Inclusive Education. The World Health Organization (WHO) in its International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps (1996) has defined the terms Impairment, Disability and Handicap as below:

Impairment refers to “A physical or mental defect at the level of a body system or organ.” According to the World Health Organization, "Impairment" is any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure or function.

Disability refers to “A person-level limitations in physical and psychocognitive activities” In the Greek and Roman periods disability was thought to be a “punishment of the gods” It was meant to be a bad or evil sign. Great philosophers like Plato and Aristotle suggested infanticide in cases of disability. Cicero called for the purity of the race and demanded a society free of “defectives” with the ultimate purpose of creating a society and military force of superior humans. Even the Old Testament of the Bible which had announced that “*God created man in his own image*”!!! has held that Disability was an impurity and disable as unclean persons who cannot approach sacred places such as a temple.

There are many explanations and definitions to describe disability and most of these definitions make reference to disability as a pathology giving it a physiological, biological and intellectual basis. Hence in our times most definitions of disability are medical definitions and requiring medical answers and solutions. Such a medical approach to define disability has given rise to the idea that the disabled people are objects to be “treated”, “changed” or “improved” and made more “normal”. This medical approach views the disabled person as requiring to “fit in” instead of the society needing to change and adjust to the disabled. Rieser and Mason (1992) in their studies have found that the very notion of disability as a medical condition has been responsible for a distorted approach to the understanding and education of the disabled.

The term disability is of great significance since it plays a significant role in the Inclusive Education debate. Disability is a greatly varied and complex condition having a wide range of implications for social identity and behaviour of individuals. It goes without saying that Disability depends on the context and is more often a consequence of discrimination, prejudice and exclusion. It is the inclusion or exclusion of the disabled in education and community which throws light on the shortcomings in the environment and in the various organized activities in a society. Analysis of such inclusion or exclusion of the disabled not only tells about the conditions that prevent persons with disabilities from participating on equal terms but also acts as a barometer of the health of a given society and its attitude towards all its members, abled as well as disabled, in short all its members who are differently abled. Hence the concept of Disability as understood today apart from being a physical one is more of a social one having a direct bearing on the social reality and social structuring of society.

Metts has stated that “Disability is a phenomenon that exists in all societies and tends to affect predictable proportions of each population”.<sup>1</sup>

It is said that disability and its definitions largely depend on the context. For a long time and atleast 1980 there was no commonly agreed definition of disability. Traditionally, disability was viewed as a medical condition, and with individual ramifications. Therefore many definitions projected that disability was a medical condition and an individual pathology. Thus historically disability came to be associated with physiological, biological and intellectual impairment of an individual. This has been highlighted by scholars like Pam Shakespear<sup>2</sup> and Wolfensburger<sup>3</sup>. According to these and other scholars the medical approach to disability gave rise to the impression that human beings, especially those with disabilities were “objects” to be “treated”, “changed” or “improved” and made more “normal”. According to these scholars the medical definitions of disability gave rise to the notion that such disabled persons had to “fit into” the society and thus had to be rehabilitated rather than the society having to adjust to their needs. The medical definitions thus failed to relate the needs of the disabled person to the society in the proper perspective.

According to many of the scholars as also according to the World Health Organization there are three elements in disability. The first is about the bodily function or structure, termed as ‘impairment’. The second is concerned with activities, or ‘disability’. And the third is related to social participation, which is called ‘handicap’. However some have strongly objected to use of terminology such as ‘handicapped’ and have been trying to relate and understand disability in terms of the social norms and expectations that shape the experience of individuals with disabilities. Some people with disabilities do not like the term “handicap” because of

a belief that it originally meant someone who did not work but went around begging with a cap in hand. The true origin of the word “Handicap” has been from a lottery game of 1600s known as Hand-In-Cap in which players placed money in a cap. In 1915 this term came to be used for disabled people, when it was used to describe crippled children and over the years this term came to be in wide use for the disabled persons resulting in much resentment among the disabled who being viewed as ‘handicapped’ can to be treated derisively. In 1980 the WHO first attempted to define the term disability but a consensus dodged it. This classification first created in 1980 was called the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities, and Handicaps, or ICIDH by WHO to provide for a unifying universal framework for classifying the health components of functioning and disability.

The continuing confusion about differing perceptions of the issue of disabilities led to the WHO trying to arrive at a universal definition about disability. The World Health Organization (WHO), after nine years of coordinated efforts at international level with many revisions finally on May 22, 2001 at its World Health Assembly, approved the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health abbreviated as "ICF."

The World Health Organization thus defines Disability as follows: "Disabilities is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations. Thus disability is a complex phenomenon, reflecting an interaction between features of a person’s body and features

of the society in which he or she lives."<sup>4</sup> According to the World Health Organization "Disability" is any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.

A person can be termed as disabled if that person has had an impairment in the past or is seen as disabled based on a personal or group standard or norm. These impairments could be physical, sensory, and developmental or cognitive disabilities. A disability can be present from birth of a person or it can happen during a person's lifetime. A physical disability is any disability which limits the physical function of a person's limbs or affects the person's motor ability.

As has been already stated disability is a wide term covering many aspects. The disabled persons do not form a single homogeneous group but belong to varied categories of disabilities and can be termed as the mentally retarded, the visually, hearing and speech impaired, the physically challenged and those with both restricted physical mobility and mental disabilities. All these different disabled persons encounter different barriers and have to be overcome them in different ways. Each is to be treated differently since the abilities of each such affected person are different.

The most important level that the disabled persons are to be helped is at the social acceptance and social accommodation level because they suffer the greatest handicap with the society. Handicap refers to "the social abilities or relation between the individual and the society." According to the World Health Organization "Handicap" is a disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from an impairment or disability, that, limits or

prevents the fulfillment of a role that is normal, depending on age, sex, social and cultural factors, for that individual."<sup>5</sup>

According to the UN's World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons "Handicap is therefore a function of the relationship between disabled persons and their environment. It occurs when they encounter cultural, physical or social barriers which prevent their access to the various systems of society that are available to other citizens. Thus, handicap is the loss or-limitation of opportunities to take part in the life of the community on an equal level with others."<sup>6</sup>

### **Regular Education or General Education**

Regular Education also called as General Education is designed to provide breadth to the curriculum and a common educational experience for all students. It is usually defined on an institution-wide basis and involves study in several subject areas wherer all the students study the same curriculum. The General Education is a program of study that provides the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and perspectives that enable students to achieve their academic, career, and life goals.

Regular school education is the foundational education with experience of all round learning and it encompasses the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that are required for further education, career and life. General education develops the cognitive process of reasoning essential for effective functioning and self-directed learning which helps an individual in the society and at work place. Regular/General education provides opportunities for the regular/general student:

- to think logically, critically, and creatively;
- to communicate effectively both orally and in writing;



- to read extensively and perceptively;
- to explore moral and aesthetic values, social relationships, and critical thinking through the humanities;
- to understand the importance of key social institutions, ethics and values, and how individuals influence events and function with others in these institutions throughout the world;
- to appreciate creative and aesthetic expressions along with their impact on individuals and cultures;
- to express, define, and logically explore questions about the world through mathematics;
- to use computer technology to communicate and to solve problems;
- to use acquired facts, concepts, and principles of the physical and natural sciences in applying the scientific process to natural phenomena;
- to perceive the importance of wellness and values in human life;
- to manifest a commitment to life long learning.
- to rationalize and to generate or develop further the existing concepts and knowledge.

In short regular or general education is geared to a broad, general and a long learning process. The majority of students the world over are subjected to learning in a general classroom where the learning of the above mentioned type takes place. This kind of education is found to prevail throughout the world and also in India.

### **Special Education**

The term Special Education is most widely used in the last few decades and has come to signify education of the children who are disabled and who have specific educational needs. According to the New World

Encyclopadeia “Special education is the term most commonly used to describe the methodology and practice of education for students with special needs, such as learning difficulties, mental health issues, specific disabilities (physical or developmental). Ideologies and application of special education can differ from region to region, nation to nation, but most developed countries recognize the importance of the field.

Special education exists so that students with special needs can achieve the same educational goals as all students. Since such students have different needs, learn in different ways, and interact socially in different fashions than other students the techniques used may be very different from the general population, and differ greatly within the special student population itself.

Special education exists primarily because certain students are not capable of receiving the same level of education if taught in the same manner and with the same techniques as the larger school population. Special education students often have different needs, learn in different ways, and interact socially in different fashions than other students.”<sup>7</sup>

According to Jennifer E. Sisk the goals of special education are similar to those for all children although the techniques used may be very different. Also persons with physical disabilities like blindness or deafness can adopt alternative forms of reading and writing while physically disabled would require speech therapy or a physical environment that allows wheelchairs or other physical aids. For those with emotional or disabilities, therapy to bring about behavioral adjustments and the ability to function in a social environment are needed. Thus she says that special education exists so as to ensure that students with special needs receive an education comparable to the rest of the student body, by employing

researched and verified methods that help individual students learn in the style most beneficial to them.<sup>8</sup>

The need to balance the special needs of each student against the general needs of the students at large has been the subject of ongoing debate. The ultimate aim of all educational is to ensure that all students get education, and students with special needs should also get educated. But the issue that arises is whether the educational needs of all (general) students be sacrificed for the specific needs of the disabled students. Thus the field of special education has been seized of the issue as to how while educating students with special needs the same could be included in the overall educational system so as to serve the society as a whole and to the most effective level possible.

Hence Special Education is “specially” designed instruction or education to meet the unique needs and abilities of exceptional or challenged students. Such education is carried out in Special Schools which have special settings, special facilities and special teachers. Special Education is quite new and of recent origin. Historically, persons with disabilities were very often confined to hospitals, asylums, or other institutions and these places provided hardly any education. However for last few decades the persons with disabilities were given education in special school. At the same time the students without such disabilities were educated in the regular schools. This gave rise to a dual system of education—one for persons with disabilities and another one for the students without such disabilities.

### **Segregation/Exclusion**

According to the New World Encyclopedia, “Full-time placement in a special education classroom may be referred to as **segregation**. In this

model, students with special needs spend no time with typically developing students. Segregation is geared towards students who require intensive support or are unable to cope with even brief attendance in a regular classroom.<sup>[6]</sup> Segregated students may attend the same school as other children from their neighborhood, but spend their time exclusively in a special-needs classroom. Alternatively, these students may attend a special school that is specifically designed, resourced, and staffed to meet the needs of the particular students who attend it.

A student whose disabilities preclude attending any school is said to be **excluded**. Such a student may be in hospital, homebound, or detained by the criminal justice system. These students may receive one-on-one instruction or group instruction within their institution. Residential centers, are live-in schools where complex needs can be met with appropriate medical care and provision of a variety of therapies, are sometimes considered segregation and sometimes exclusion. Students who have been suspended or expelled from their regular schools are not considered excluded in this sense”<sup>9</sup>.

Thus segregation is akin to seclusion and exclusion and is a natural corollary of exclusivist approach resulting in the exclusive education model of special education.

### **Special Needs Education**

According to Britannica Concise Encyclopedia “Children with motor disabilities, once considered subjects for special education, are usually integrated into the standard classroom, often by means of wheelchairs and modified desks. Children with learning disabilities and speech problems usually require specialized techniques, often on an individual basis. For children with behavioral and emotional disorders, special therapeutic and

clinical services may be provided.”<sup>10</sup> Thus there are children who need special treatment because they have special needs.

According to Glyn Sheridan the label of "special needs" applies to mental or physical disabilities or circumstances that create an exceptional situation requiring individualized educational programs, physical accessibility or primary care requirements. She says that “Within different segments of society, individuals who face physical, mental or emotional challenges may qualify for special treatment or benefits. In most instances, the label of "special needs" applies to mental or physical disabilities or circumstances that create an exceptional situation requiring individualized educational programs, physical accessibility or primary care requirements.”<sup>11</sup> Thus children who suffer from a physical disability or mental disabilities are considered as having "special needs". The Education Act 1996 of UK says that 'a child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.' It further states that 'a disability, which prevents or hinders them from making use of education facilities', tantamounts to a learning difficulty in case it calls for special educational provision to be made. Special educational provision means providing additional or different facilities and assistance than that provided normally to children of the same age.

The concept of Special Needs Education or Special Educational Needs is now almost universally accepted and followed. The UK *Special Educational Needs* and Disability Act 2001 also acknowledges the Special Needs Education or Special Educational Needs as essential and attempts to facilitate it.

The term 'special educational needs' has been used in the UK to refer to children who have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder

for them to learn or access education than most children of their age. It is a fact that many students have 'special educational needs' and these could be of any kind and could be faced at some time during the period of education. The students with 'special educational needs' because they face learning difficulties or disabilities it makes it harder for them to learn than most other students of their own age. Most often these students have a need for either extra help or different kind of help. Students with special needs may need extra assistance due to different needs, such as:

- physical or sensory difficulties,
- difficulties with thinking and understanding,
- emotional and behavioural difficulties,
- difficulties with speech and language,
- difficulty relating to and behaving with other people.

A large number of students do have learning difficulties at some point in time during their education period. Most of these students do get sufficient help to overcome their learning difficulties but a few students may require extra help either for a short while or throughout their entire education period. Students with special educational needs' could and do have difficulties with:

- School work,
- reading, writing, number work or understanding information,
- expressing themselves or understanding what others are saying,
- making friends or relating to adults,
- behaving properly in school,
- organising themselves,
- some kind of sensory or physical needs which may affect them in school,

Students with special educational needs' can and are sometimes given special education in the ordinary, mainstream, early education setting or school, sometimes with the help of special educators, outside specialists or NGOs.<sup>12</sup>

### **Integration**

The term integration has been in vogue for some time and it meant integrating the disabled into education and society. The moving spirit behind the idea of Integration was the motto "Moving them into school/society normally as much as possible" Integration was sought to be achieved through bringing the disabled into the mainstream of education. This was spoken of as Physical Integration, Social Integration and Pedagogical (Learning-teaching) Integration or Educational Integration. The idea of integration was to bring about the education of the disabled through Mainstreaming or Inclusion.

The concept of integration has its roots in the civil rights/racial desegregation legislation of the 1960s in the USA. Hence integration is primarily thought to be a legal term. In its original context integration meant integration of the blacks into the American mainstream but when this came to apply for the disabled students it meant to intergate them in the mainstream schools in the USA. The main idea was to achieve social and academic interactions between students of all kinds.

The idea of integration is the antithesis of segregation which was practiced in America against the Blacks. In practice a similar practice of segregation the the disabled in separate schools was also prevalent in USA. Once the Black Civil Rights movement achieved its goal of desegregation of the Blacks from the whites, the logical extension of the same idea to the context of the disabled and the field of education

resulted in the talk of Integration in the field of education wherein the disabled students were to be pulled out of the segregation and integrated in the normal schools by way of mainstreaming their education. Thus, the term "integration," conveyed the idea that students with disabilities were to be desegregated from "pull-out" programs, self-contained classrooms, special schools, or institutions, and integrated into the regular classrooms of general schools. The idea was not just achieving physical proximity among the students of all abilities or different abilities but also of achieving academic and social integration as well. According to Sailor (1989) integration of the children with special needs into inclusive setting schools was parallel to racial desegregation.

### **Mainstreaming**

Mainstreaming is another concept which has been in circulation for last few decades and has gained currency in the context of education of the disabled. "Mainstreaming has been used to refer to the selective placement of special education students in one or more "regular" education classes. Proponents of mainstreaming generally assume that a student must "earn" his or her opportunity to be placed in regular classes by demonstrating an ability to "keep up" with the work assigned by the regular classroom teacher. This concept is closely linked to traditional forms of special education service delivery."<sup>13</sup>

Thus in the field of education the practice of educating disabled students or students with special needs in regular classes during specific time periods and based on their skills and abilities is termed as Mainstreaming. In Mainstreaming approach to education the regular education classes are combined with special education classes and students with all kinds of abilities are imparted education together.



Mainstreaming has been largely associated with the physical assimilation of students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers. The mainstreaming approach believes that students with disabilities must share the same physical space (playground, classrooms, etc.) with students who have no disabilities. However those who advocate mainstreaming limit such activity to only those disabled students who are able to do the same activities as everyone else and with minimal changes and modifications. In the mainstream kind of education the primary responsibility for education of the disabled students rests with their special education teacher. The schools which practice mainstreaming are of the belief that the disabled students who cannot function in a regular classroom atleast upto a certain level cannot be placed in the regular classes and believe that such disabled students "belong" to the special education environment. Therefore mainstreaming is in favour of providing access to the student with a disability in a special education classroom, which is also called as "self-contained classroom or resource room". In such an environment of mainstreaming the disabled students have the access to special education teachers, where the educational needs of the disabled are addressed and met.

According to Rogers (1993), mainstreaming has generally been used to refer to the selective placement of special education students in one or more "regular" education classes.<sup>14</sup> In the Mainstreaming a disabled student must be mainstream-able which means he must have the ability to keep up with the work assigned by the teacher to the other students in the class.

Mainstreaming means not palcing a disabled child for full-time in a special school. It means providing a disabled student or a student with special needs appropriate and even special education in general school

but with the necessary special supports and special teachers while at the same time being placed physically in a general school with the peer group.

But Mainstreaming also does not mean putting a disabled student for full-time in a regular classroom. If a disabled student is placed for the entire day in a regular classroom with non-disabled students of his or her age then this is not just mainstreaming but is full inclusion. Disabled students with moderate or mild disabilities such as dyslexia or attention deficit disorder, or with non-cognitive disabilities such as diabetes can be fully included in a normal classroom but the same may not work for more severely disabled students.

It is also held that Mainstreaming is not teaching the child outside of school and in an exclusive situation. A disabled student taught in a hospital or at home cannot be said to be mainstreamed but considered as excluded.

### **Advantages of mainstreaming**

According to Sue Watson a Developmental Support Counselor, Mainstreaming is said to have many advantages such as :

- Students are more likely to attend the school they would normally attend.
- The educational setting is more authentic.
- Regular and special education support provides a more individualized approach.
- Greater social opportunities
- Curricula is more relevant to the grade

- Greater sense of belonging
- The IEP is still in place in the regular classroom using the inclusional approach.

### **Benefits to students with disabilities:**

Mainstreaming students with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers, helps them to get access to the general curriculum for children with disabilities. It has been shown through several studies that students with disabilities who are mainstreamed have:

*1. Higher academic achievement:* Mainstreaming is said to be far more academically effective when disabled students are educated outside school setup. According to a study by the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities about the Mainstreaming Deaf Students carried out in USA it was found that graduation rates of all students with disabilities in the U.S. increased by 14% from 1984 to 1997. According to Meyer and Poon (2001) access to a resource room for direct instruction is effective in increasing students academic skills and thus increasing the abilities applied by students in a general education setting.<sup>15</sup>

According to Madden and Slaven (1983) Mainstreaming of the disabled students has shown to improve academic achievement in students with mild academic disabilities, as well as to improve their long-term behavior.<sup>16</sup>

*2. Higher self-esteem:* By mainstreaming in a regular school setting students with disabilities have exhibited greater confidence and self-efficacy. A mainstreaming approach is said to facilitate the development of greater self esteem in the disabled students. According to National Research Center on Learning Disabilities of USA which carried out a

study in 2007 it reported that out of the assessed disabled students, 96% felt they were more confident, 3% thought they had the same experience as an excluded student, and 1% felt they had less self-esteem. This study reported that overall, disabled students felt that they were equal to their peers and felt that they should not be treated any differently.<sup>17</sup>

*3. Better social skills:* Again it has been found that mainstreaming allows students with disabilities to learn social skills much faster through observation and also gain a better understanding of the world around them and thus become a part of the “regular” community or society. Mainstreaming is considered to be especially beneficial for children suffering with autism. According to Wolfberg and Schuler children with autism interacting with same-aged “normal” children, were observed to be six times more likely to engage in social relations outside of the classroom.<sup>18</sup>

Also according to Tidmarsh and Volkmar since children with autism have severely restricted interests and abnormalities in communication and social interaction, the increased interaction with normal children is likely to be beneficial to them. Studies have shown that students with Down’s syndrome were three times more likely to communicate with other people if mainstreamed.<sup>19</sup>

Mainstreaming also benefits other children. It opens the lines of communication between those students with disabilities and their peers. If they are included into classroom activities, all students become more sensitive to the fact that these students may need extra assistance.

### **Benefits to non-disabled students:**

Many scholars including Suomi, Collier, Brown and others believe that educating non-disabled or 'normal' students along with the students with disabilities creates an atmosphere of understanding and tolerance that helps all students of all abilities to function better in the society and in the world after education in school is over. Students without disabilities studying in the mainstreamed schools and having joint physical education program were found to have increased self-concept, tolerance, self worth, and a better understanding of other people and especially of the disabled persons.<sup>20</sup>

M.E Block in his study has found that the students without disabilities but part of a mainstreaming programme stated that the mainstreaming program was important because it prepared them to deal with disability in their own lives.<sup>21</sup> Some scholars Like Lieberman, James and Ludwa have found that the improvement in the skills and abilities of the students with disabilities in a mainstreamed form of education was attributable to the Contact Theory which holds that close proximity and social and physical contact fosters learning much faster.<sup>22</sup> Scholars like Chu and Griffey have also tested the effect of the Contact theory (which asserts that frequent, meaningful, and pleasant interactions between people with differences tend to produce changes in attitude) in the mainstreamed environment and have found to hold good for the students studying in such mainstreamed environment.<sup>23</sup>

### **Disadvantages of Mainstreaming**

Despite mainstreaming in education showing that there are many benefits, there are also disadvantages to the mainstreaming type of education.

**Adverse impact on non-disabled students' academic education:**

One of the most serious disadvantage to mainstreaming, is that a mainstreamed disabled students generally require much more attention from the teacher when compared to attention required by the non-disabled students in a general class. It is found that due to mainstreaming of the disabled students time and attention is often taken away from the rest of the class. In order to meet the needs of a single student with special needs the teacher is found to neglect the other normal non-disabled students. But the effect that a mainstreamed disabled student has on the whole class largely depends on the particular disabilities suffered as also on the resources and facilities available. In several cases, this problem has been sought to overcome by placing an assistant teacher or a special educator in the classroom to assist the student with special needs. But this raises the costs associated with educating in the mainstream schools.

**Adverse Impact to students with disabilities' academic education:**

Many fear that general education teachers in the mainstreamed setup do not have the training and skills to teach and manage the special needs of the disabled students present in a general education classroom. But such concerns can be easily addressed by providing professional training and supportive services in the classroom. According to scholars and researchers like Joyce and Weil lack of awareness among the teachers in the mainstream schools about the needs of the disabled students leads to ignoring or even resisting the disabled students in a general classroom and this can be very detrimental to the disabled students.<sup>24</sup>

**Social issues:** Compared to fully included students with disabilities, those who are mainstreamed for only certain classes or certain times may feel

conspicuous or socially rejected by their classmates. They may become targets for bullying. Mainstreamed students may feel embarrassed by the additional services they receive in a regular classroom, such as an aide to help with written work or to help the student manage behaviors. Some students with disabilities may feel more comfortable in an environment where most students are working at the same level or with the same supports.

### **Cost Factor:**

Another major disadvantage is that the schools adopting the approach of mainstreaming the disabled students are required to provide special education services to the disabled and may not be given or able to garner additional financial resources. The cost of providing special education is quite high since the student:teacher ratio has to be low. The cost of education of the disabled is much higher almost double than that of educating a non-disabled student. .

### **Management Factor:**

It requires a lot of attention for getting correct combinations of students with disabilities in a mainstreamed classroom. For instance, a student with autism may not combine well with a student with behavioural problems or conduct disorder, but placing many children with dyslexia in the same class could be a good idea.

Thus in conclusion it can be asserted with Powell (2007) that mainstreaming is really an older term that refers to a process (usually a gradual or a part-time process) involving the placement of the disabled student in a regular classroom alongside the non-disabled students. For instance, disabled students who are mainstreamed in a general school

could attend separate classes within the regular school but they will also attend one or two regular classes such as gym or art or play together with the other non-disabled students. However, according to Powell it is necessary to qualify mainstreaming since one of the key assumptions of mainstreaming is that certain special education students can be placed in regular classrooms because their disabilities are few and it can be expected that they will perform at or near grade level with few or no accommodations or modifications. In short Mainstreaming occurs when a disabled student spends part of his day in a self-contained setting such as a Resource Room and the other part of his day in a regular education classroom along with the other students. Mainstreaming usually occurs for extra-curricular and non-academic activities such as art, music, drama, gymn and recesses. The most important benefit of mainstreaming is that the disabled students receives special education services and other support he or she needs while in the self-contained classroom setting of the Resource Room and yet gets the opportunity to be with and participate with the non-disabled peers. In Mainstreaming setup therefore both groups of students learn from each other while taking part in the extra-curricular activities. This form of education of the disabled has been practiced for quite some time now and has been well received and well developed in the advanced countries.

## **Concept of Inclusive Education**

### **Inclusion**

It is reported that “Regular education classes combined with special education services is a model often referred to as inclusion. In this model, students with special needs are educated with their typically developing peers for at least half of the day. In a full inclusion model, specialized services are provided within a regular classroom by sending the service



provider in to work with one or more students in their regular classroom setting.”<sup>25</sup> According to the New World Encyclopedia “ In a partial inclusion model, specialized services are provided outside a regular classroom. In this case, the student occasionally leaves the regular classroom to attend smaller, more intensive instructional sessions, or to receive other related service such as speech and language therapy, occupational and/or physical therapy, and social work. Inclusion is geared towards students who do not require intensive support.”<sup>26</sup>

However there is much difference of opinion as regards what is meant by Inclusion. For instance, Clough and Corbett (2000) have stated that “Inclusive Education is a contestable term that has come to mean different things to politicians, bureaucrats and academics. Inclusion is not a single movement; it is made up of many strong currents of belief, many different local struggles and myriad forms of practice”<sup>27</sup>

Another scholar N Segal (2005) “Inclusive Education has become an international buzz word”<sup>28</sup> and he believes that it has been adopted in the rhetoric of many countries across the world. According to T. Booth (1996) inclusive education is a “process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education”.<sup>29</sup>

The UNESCO has defined inclusion as a developmental approach that “seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion”<sup>30</sup> The principles of inclusive education were first adopted at the UNESCO’s Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education held in 1994 and they were then restated at the Dakar World

Education Forum in 2000. The UNESCO states “Inclusive education means that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups.”<sup>31</sup>

Len Barton has stated that “Inclusive education is not merely about providing access into mainstream school for pupils who have previously been excluded. It is not about closing down an unacceptable system of segregated provision and dumping those closing down an unacceptable system of segregated provision and dumping those pupils in an unchanged mainstream system. Existing school systems in terms of physical factors, curriculum aspects, teaching expectations and styles, leadership roles. will have to change. This is because inclusive education is about the participation of ALL children and young people and the removal of all forms of exclusionary practice.”<sup>32</sup>

Similar views have been expressed by and Ainscow (1999) and by Armstrong (2003). They both hold that “Inclusion refers to a set of principles, values and practices which involve the social transformation of education systems and communities. It does not refer to a fixed state or set of criteria to be used as a blue-print, but seeks to challenge deficit thinking and practice which are ‘still ingrained’ and too often lead many to believe that some pupils have to be dealt with in a separate way.”<sup>33</sup>

According to Stainback & Stainback “Inclusion” is education of all students in regular classes. It means appropriate educational programs for every student. It means everyone is accepted and supported. Inclusion

assumes that students with disabilities can and should attend ordinary schools. The fundamental principle is that all children are to be together as much as possible”.<sup>34</sup> Therefore inclusion in the domain of education means students with disabilities who have special educational needs must spend most or all of their time with non-disabled students in the same classroom. However such inclusion is to be practiced keeping in mind the nature of disability.

As for the UNESCO inclusive education means that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. Thus for UNESCO it meant all children whether disabled or gifted children, street children or working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic or ethnic or cultural minorities as also children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups.<sup>35</sup>

According to another researcher J W Wood (1998) opinions about inclusion differ globally and depend on “what it is, where it occurs, how it is implemented and so on. What ever, the term, it is a reality that students with special needs and those at risk will at some level receive instruction in the general education setting.”<sup>36</sup>

According to paper by Jill Balescut and Kenneth Eklindh inclusive education differs from previously held notions of ‘integration’ and ‘mainstreaming’, which tended to be concerned principally with disability and ‘special educational needs’ and implied learners changing or becoming ‘ready for’ accommodation by the mainstream. By contrast, inclusion is about the child’s right to participate and the school’s duty to accept the child. Inclusion rejects the use of special schools or classrooms to separate students with disabilities from students without disabilities. A

premium is placed upon full participation by students with disabilities and upon respect for their social, civil, and educational rights.<sup>37</sup>

It is now a fact that inclusive schools do not distinguish between "general education" and "special education" programs; instead, the school is adapted in such a manner that all students learn together. In an inclusive education school the disabled are taught along with the non-disabled ones but with the due regard to their special educational needs. Hence Inclusive Education considers the disabled children as 'children with special needs' who require special attention. Inclusive approach refuses to perceive disabled children as 'impaired' or 'handicapped'. Inclusive is said to be 'Making the programme for disabled children as an integral part of the general educational system rather than a system within general education'.

The supporters of Inclusion want to maximize the participation of all learners in the community schools of their choice, thereby make learning more meaningful and relevant for all, especially for the learners who are most vulnerable to exclusionary pressures. The main idea behind inclusion is to rethink and restructure policies, curricula, cultures and practices in schools and educational institutions so that diverse learning needs can be met of students with diverse abilities and needs. The important considerations of Inclusive Education are that:

- All students whatever their abilities can learn and benefit from education.
- Schools can and should adapt to the needs of students, rather than students adapting to the needs of the school.
- Differences between students are not obstacles but are a source of richness and diversity.

- The different needs and pace of development of students with differing abilities can be met through a wide and flexible range of responses which are to the benefit of all the students including those with disabilities.

Inclusive education is therefore a process of removing barriers to the education of the disabled and enabling all students with all kinds of abilities and needs to get education within general school systems.

Inclusive education, therefore tries to satisfy the learning needs of all children, youth and adults and especially those who suffer from disabilities and who are often excluded. It tries to accommodate in the mainstream of education all those who are vulnerable, marginalized and excluded. Inclusive education means educating all students with or without disabilities together through easy and non-discriminatory access to common pre-school provisions, schools and community educational setting but with proper support services and facilities and infrastructure. Inclusive education thus calls for a flexible education system which accepts, accommodates and assimilates the needs of a wide range of learners and adapts itself to meet the differing needs. Inclusive education tries to help all the stakeholders in the system (made up of learners, parents, community, teachers, administrators, policy makers) to accept diversity of students abilities at learning and see it as a challenge to impart education to all including the students with disabilities and not to see education of all students carried out together in a same setting as a problem.

Hence the concept of Inclusion is a philosophy that calls for including all in a single setup and encourages adoption of an educational approach which provides all students equal and non-discriminatory membership of

the society and also accords greater opportunities for academic and social achievement. Inclusive Education therefore attempts to put into practice that each and every student with whatever abilities is welcome in the same educational setting and assures that their unique needs and learning styles are valuable, are appreciated and will be respected and encouraged.

According to Nevada Partnership for Inclusive Education, “At no time does inclusion require the classroom curriculum, or the academic expectations, to be watered down. On the contrary, inclusion enhances learning for students, both with and without special needs. Students learn, and use their learning differently; the goal is to provide *all* students with the instruction they need to succeed as learners and achieve high standards, alongside their friends and neighbors.”<sup>38</sup>

According to the then Minister of Human Resources Development of Government of India “In its broadest and all encompassing meaning, inclusive education, as an approach, seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. It implies all learners, young people - with or without disabilities being able to learn together through access to common pre-school provisions, schools and community educational setting with an appropriate network of support services. This is possible only in a flexible education system that assimilates the needs of a diverse range of learners and adapts itself to meet these needs. It aims at all stakeholders in the system (learners, parents, community, teachers, administrators, policy makers) to be comfortable with diversity and see it as a challenge rather than a problem. Research has shown that Inclusive education results in improved social development and academic outcomes for all learners. It leads to the development of social skills and

better social interactions because learners are exposed to real environment in which they have to interact with other learners each one having unique characteristics, interests and abilities. The non-disabled peers adopt positive attitudes and actions towards learners with disabilities as a result of studying together in an inclusive classroom. Thus, inclusive education lays the foundation to an inclusive society accepting, respecting and celebrating diversity”<sup>39</sup>

Scholars on Inclusive Education, Erwin and Rogers stress the idea, held by several other inclusion advocates that students with disabilities should not just be educated with non-disabled counterparts, but should be accomplished in the child’s neighborhood school "in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend."

Inclusion is thus a practice, whereby students with special educational needs spend most or all of their time with non-disabled students. This practice is generally applied to selected students suffering from mild to severe disabilities. Thus it is a fact that inclusive education differs from notions like ‘integration’ and ‘mainstreaming’. Integration and Mainstreaming are mostly concerned education of students with disability in a different manner than in an inclusive setting. Inclusive education is far more radical and a definite advance over the notions of ‘integration’ and ‘mainstreaming’. Inclusion is directly concerned with the child’s right to participate in the usual educational setting and it is the school’s duty to accept all children without reservations in their system. Inclusion is thus concerned with justice and non-discrimination in a complete manner. Consequently the proponents of Inclusion reject the idea of special schools or classrooms or Resource Rooms to separately educate the students with disabilities away from peers/students without disabilities. Inclusion requires and supports full participation by students

with disabilities along with the other non-disabled students. Inclusion is thus to do with the fundamental right to education of a student with disabilities to get not merely appropriate education but also to get just and egalitarian education. Inclusion is an attempt to gain full respect for the social, civil, and educational rights of the students with disabilities. Inclusive approach to education rejects the distinguish between "general education" and "special education" programs and works towards restructuring the existing educational system where all students learn together.

Inclusion in the domain of education for the persons with disabilities means maximizing the participation of all learners in the normal schools of their choice, generally in their own localities, proximate to their homes. Inclusion is therefore an attempt at making learning more meaningful and relevant for all, especially for those who are most likely to be excluded from being taught in the regular or general schools. Inclusion in education is a clarion call to question, to rethink and to restructure all such policies, curricula, cultures and practices in schools which seek to discriminate among the students based on their abilities or disabilities. Inclusion call for creating such learning environments where diverse learning needs of all the students can be met under a single physical space called school. Hence it is said that “Inclusive education is a process of removing barriers and enabling all students, including previously excluded groups, to learn and participate effectively within general school systems.”<sup>40</sup>

Hence the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education appropriately announces “And because the world is changing, because moral values are being re-examined as stereotypical thinking is increasingly exposed, because national and international guidance advocates inclusion and,



quite simply, because any alternative seems unacceptable, if not morally flawed:

- Valuing some people more than others is unethical.
- Maintaining barriers to some students' participation in the cultures, curricula and communities of local schools is unacceptable.
- Preserving school cultures, policies and practices that are non-responsive to the diversity of learners perpetuates inequalities.
- Thinking that inclusion mostly concerns disabled learners is misleading.
- Thinking that school changes made for some will not benefit others is short-sighted.
- Viewing differences between students as problems to be overcome is disrespectful and limits learning opportunities.
- Segregated schooling for disabled learners violates their basic human right to education without discrimination.
- Improving schools only for students is disrespectful to all other stakeholders.
- Identifying academic achievement as the main aim of schooling detracts from the importance of personal and moral development.
- Isolating schools and local communities from one another deprives everyone of enriching experiences.
- Perceiving inclusion in education as a separate issue from inclusion in society is illogical.

People often have views on inclusion but little time, energy or inclination to explore them. The issues are not simple and answers are far from straightforward.”<sup>41</sup>

W Stainback and S Stainback have expressed it well by stating thus “Advocates say that even partial non-inclusion is morally unacceptable. Proponents believe that non-inclusion reduces the disabled students' social importance and that maintaining their social visibility is more important than their academic achievement. Proponents say that society accords disabled people less human dignity when they are less visible in general education classrooms. Advocates say that even if typical students are harmed academically by the full inclusion of certain special needs students, that the non-inclusion of these students would still be morally unacceptable, as advocates believe that the harm to typical students' education is always less important than the social harm caused by making people with disabilities less visible in society.”<sup>42</sup>

Inclusion is thus not a matter of merely providing education. Rather it is the matter of allowing in the daily life the operation of basic rights of the persons with disabilities.

### **Inclusion and Integration**

During the last few decades there have been a genuine efforts at providing appropriate education for the students with disabilities. A movement from the traditional school education system tailored to the needs of so-called ‘normal’ students to the exclusion of those termed as ‘disabled’ to one where all children irrespective of their abilities could be educated together has been an arduous one. Many different notions emerged in this quest to bring about the education of all students with their abilities at learning. Though the dual system (regular v/s special schools) has been in operation for long time providing segregated education to the student without disabilities and students with disabilities separately, the efforts to create a harmonious single system of education

for all students has been not only been slow but also paved with different notions such as integration, mainstreaming and presently inclusion. The notions were put forth intending to bring the students with disabilities in the ambit of universal education through a single education system. Two notions emerged vying for currency and acceptance and both these notions, namely, Integration and Mainstreaming, were genuine first beginnings to bridge the gap between the two distinct or dual education systems. In most discussions on Inclusion the two terms of Integration and Mainstreaming also occur often leading to confusion and misunderstandings. There is a difference between Inclusion and the two terms Integration and Mainstreaming and the difference needs to be understood to properly understand how Inclusion is different.

According to Susie Miles “integrated education is about 'going to school' whereas inclusive education is about 'participating in school'. However it is important not to become too school-focused and remember that education is much broader than schooling. Inclusive education should incorporate a range of strategies within a community which ensure that all children have equal access to education. This education should equip them for life as part of that community and help develop their potential.”<sup>43</sup>

According to T.M.Qureshi “Integrated education essentially follows the medical model of disability which sees the child as a problem and demands that the child is changed, or rehabilitated, to fit the system. Inclusive education is more in tune with the social model of disability which sees the system as the problem. The school and the education system as a whole is enabled to change in order to meet the individual needs of all learners.”<sup>44</sup>

According to Ringer and Kerr (1988) “Legally, integration is a civil rights issue, not a philosophical or educational trend. Federal courts have made clear that if a child can "feasibly" be integrated, segregation is illegal, regardless of the school district's philosophical perspective on integration.”<sup>45</sup>

According to proponents of inclusive education “Inclusion is a somewhat more values-oriented term than integration, its legal counterpart.”<sup>46</sup>

According to Erwin "The true essence of inclusion is based on the premise that all individuals with disabilities have a right to be included in naturally occurring settings and activities with their neighborhood peers, siblings, and friends"<sup>47</sup>

Thus inclusion or inclusive education refers to the commitment to educate every child, to the highest possible extent in the school and classroom he or she would have attended otherwise. Inclusion is bringing education to the child and his environment rather than taking the child away and placing him or her in different settings.

Hence it is correctly said that “Integration is a necessary pre - condition for inclusion but is not a solution.”<sup>48</sup>

Inclusion is thus a definite advance over the earlier and limited notion of Integration.

### **Inclusion and Mainstreaming**

According to E J Erwin "The true essence of inclusion is based on the premise that all individuals with disabilities have a right to be included in naturally occurring settings and activities with their neighborhood peers, siblings, and friends"<sup>49</sup> According to Rogers the supporters of inclusive education use the term to refer to the commitment to educate each child,

to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend. It involves bringing the support services to the child ... and requires only that the child will benefit from being in the class (rather than having to keep up with the other students)<sup>50</sup>

Interestingly both Erwin and Rogers believe like many other inclusion advocates hold that students with disabilities should not just be educated with non-disabled peers, but that the inclusive education should be made available in the child's neighborhood school, that is "in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend." Hence providing Inclusive education means moving the essential educational and other support services and resources to the place where the child with a disability is ordinarily residing and is expected to learn and not to shift the child in a more removed or segregated setting to where services and resources are located and which may not be in the neighbourhood. An inclusive education system is thus based on a programme which allows daily and/or weekly time in the school schedule for regular and special educators to collaborate to educate the students with disabilities. The approach adopted is to increase the capacity of regular educators to be able to teach a wider number of students, including those with various disabilities. Thus inclusive education attempt to expand the roles of special educators as consultants as well as teachers.

Furthermore in sharp contrast to the approach of mainstreaming, the main responsibility for the education of students with disabilities in an inclusive system lies with the regular classroom teacher rather than with the special education teacher. However, this not mean that special education teachers do not have any direct involvement in the education of these students. It only means that the final responsibility for the education

of all students in a general classroom lies with the general classroom teacher properly called as the class-teacher in the Indian context.

Inclusive educational practices have to be necessarily child-centric if Inclusion is to work. It is for the teachers to find out each student's academic, social, and cultural need so as to determine how best to facilitate learning of each child. When teachers are child-centered their role becomes more of facilitators of learning rather than simply transmitters of knowledge. Hence teachers in the inclusive setup must acquire skills in curriculum-based assessment, team teaching, mastery learning, assessing learning styles (and modifying instruction to adapt to students' learning styles), other individualized and adaptive learning approaches, cooperative learning strategies, facilitating peer tutoring and "peer buddies," or social skills training to achieve successful education for all in the inclusive classrooms. Therefore Soffer (1994) has correctly emphasized that these are not just good special education practices, but are good practices for all teachers.

According to scholars "Regular education classes combined with special education classes is a model often referred to as mainstreaming. In this model, students with special needs are educated with their typically developing peers during specific time periods based on their skills."<sup>51</sup> According to the New World Encyclopedia on Special Education "Mainstreaming is geared towards students who require significant support and who are unsuccessful when educated entirely in a regular classroom. This means that their special education is delivered outside the regular classroom, where the student with the special need leaves the regular classroom to attend smaller, and more intensive instructional sessions. Mainstreaming is thus a partial inclusion method since the students spend at least part of the day in the regular classroom. Students

who spend all their time in special education classes outside the regular classroom are not considered mainstreamed, but rather segregated.”<sup>52</sup>

According to Nevada Partnership for Inclusive Education “Proponents of mainstreaming hold that students with special needs be placed in the general education setting solely when they can meet traditional academic expectations with minimal assistance. Yet, simply placing students with special needs in the regular classroom is not enough to impact learning. Teachers in inclusive schools are asked to vary their teaching styles to meet the diverse learning styles of a diverse population of students. Only then can the individual needs of all our students be met. Schools of the future need to ensure that each student receives the individual attention, accommodations, and supports that will result in meaningful learning.”<sup>53</sup>

The supporters of mainstreaming in education and inclusive education hold that educating children with disabilities along with the non-disabled students helps in increasing understanding and tolerance among the non-disabled students and helps them as well as the students with disabilities to function better in the world beyond school.

In the mainstreaming approach students with severe disabilities are educated alongside the non-disabled peers in a limited manner which is during the lunch and recess breaks and at the most may have been with their non-disabled peers during physical education, music, art, and/or vocational programs. Thus the mainstreaming meant a limited exposure of the students with disabilities to the general schooling setting. It is primarily the students with mild disabilities who are allowed to participate in the traditional core academic subjects such as mathematics, language, science, history, and so on.

Mainstreaming is thus the placement of students with disabilities of moderate kind in a general school setting but at the same time providing these students with specialized education as per their needs in the special settings such as Resource Rooms in the general schools. Mainstreaming is the placement of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible, and preferably in the regular classroom setting.

Keren Perles, a researcher has stated that “Although the terms “mainstreaming” and “inclusion” may be used interchangeably at times, they are in fact two very different movements. The controversy of mainstreaming vs. inclusion stems from a difference in understanding why a student with disabilities should join a general education classroom when possible.

The concept of mainstreaming is based on the fact that a student with disabilities may benefit from being in a general education classroom, both academically and socially. A mainstreamed student may have slight adjustments in how she is assessed, but she learns mostly the same material and must show that she is gaining from her classroom placement.

The concept of inclusion, on the other hand, is based on the fact that a student with disabilities deserves to have the same education as her typically developing peers. Inclusion involves more of a moral stance, and a student in an inclusion classroom usually needs only to show that she is not losing out from being included in the classroom, even if she is not necessarily making any significant gains. This blanket statement does not apply to all inclusion settings, but proponents of inclusion tend to put more of an emphasis on life preparation and social skills than on the acquisition of level-appropriate academic skills.



Based on these underlying differences between mainstreaming and inclusion, the technical aspects of instruction and assessment differ depending on which one is being used. A mainstreamed child is usually expected to keep up with the classroom instruction, although some accommodations are allowed. For example, if the class is learning about the names and capitals of the US States, a mainstreamed student may need to know only the names of the states, in addition to his own state capital. In an inclusion environment, a severely disabled student may only need to know the name of his own state and of the country. He also may receive one-on-one instruction by a paraprofessional in order to accomplish this assessment goal. The curriculum is often completely rewritten for the included student so that he will have the capability to pass the assessments and gain confidence in his skills, even if he is not performing anywhere near the level of his peers.

Another difference between mainstreaming and inclusion is the fact that a mainstreamed child often has little or no additional classroom support, aside from the regular education teacher. A student in an inclusion classroom often has an entire support team helping her to adjust to the classroom and supporting the general education teacher to be able to provide an individualized for the special education student.

In short, the main difference between mainstreaming vs. inclusion is the level of support and expectations that the student encounters. Students who are mainstreamed need to be able to handle the adjustment to a general education classroom on their own, whereas students in an inclusion setting often have support groups, in addition to expectations and assessments that are tailored to their own development.”<sup>54</sup>

According to the Texas Classroom Teachers Association “Mainstreaming” used to be considered the least restrictive environment appropriate for a special education student and allowed a student with disabilities to be pulled out of the regular classroom for special instruction until his/her academic skills increased to the same, or very nearly the same, level as same-age peers in the regular (general) classroom. The student with disabilities would then be “mainstreamed” back into the general education setting. More recently, the least restrictive option is considered “inclusion,” which emphasizes changing the system rather than the child. Proponents of inclusion insist that it isn’t necessary for a student with disabilities to be “at grade level” in order to receive instruction in the general education setting, but rather that our educational system, structure and practices need to shift and become more flexible, more inclusive, and more collaborative in order to better accommodate students with learning differences.<sup>55</sup>

According to Dale Borman Fink (2004) “inclusive classroom is a classroom that has been given the responsibility of mainstreaming special education students into the population of general education students.”<sup>56</sup> Hence Inclusion implies mainstreaming but mainstreaming does not necessarily mean Inclusion.

For Powell (2007) “mainstreaming is really an older term that refers to a process (usually a gradual or part-time process) involving the placement of the special student in a regular classroom. For example, students who are mainstreamed may attend separate classes within the regular school but they will also attend one or two regular classes such as gym or art.”

As already stated, parents of children with disabilities, activists and advocacy groups, and others became increasingly active in the 1950s and 1960s in USA and demanded legal support for the de-segregation of the disabled students and demanded Integration as a legal right and provision. Thereafter in America the court decisions and legislative endeavours began to change the way Americans treated the persons with disabilities. The passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act by Gerald Ford in 1975, mandating that all children were to be given "free appropriate education." in the "least restrictive environment." The process of educational mainstreaming of the persons with disabilities began. It is thereafter that schools, parents, and others sought to find the balance between the appropriate educational services and the appropriate educational environment and the at first the idea of mainstreaming took of followed by a more pervasive approach now called as Inclusion. Hence both Mainstreaming and inclusion are essentially notions being developed and implemented to achieve the goal of least restrictive educational environment for all and especially for students with disabilities.

In the USA the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990, popularly termed IDEA helped strengthen the education of the students with disabilities in regular-education classroom of their home-school. This law mandated the education of the children with disabilities, along with children who are non-disabled. It also permitted special classes, separate schooling and removal of children with disabilities from the

regular educational environment only when the nature or severity of the disability was such that education in regular classroom could not be carried out. IDEA 1990 also mandated the placement of every child with a disability in a general school as close as possible to the child's home. Apparently while attempting to mainstream the education of the children with disabilities laws like IDEA 1990 do not necessarily abolish all special settings purely in favour of the regular classroom. Whenever education of the children with disabilities in the regular classroom under Inclusive setting was not possible or inappropriate, the laws have permitted the placing of such disabled children in other settings which may be integrated ones (such as schools with Resource Rooms) or segregated ones (such as special schools). Of course despite EA in the courts in their decisions have been giving more serious consideration for the inclusion of children with even severe disabilities in mainstream educational programmes either in integrated or inclusive settings. But interestingly no full educational inclusion for the severely disabled has been enforced through such Court decisions. In the USA under the IDEA Act the placement of students with disabilities has come to be on the reasoning in *Daniel R.R. v. State Board of Education* (1989) as regards decisions whether a child is to be mainstreamed in inclusion or provided other specialized alternatives.

Thus since 1990s the issue of mainstreaming to the level of full inclusion or partial inclusion or segregation has been drawing much attention. Therefore the issue of mainstreaming and inclusion is one of qualifying the level and amount of inclusion that can be effectively provided in individual cases.

### **Classification of Inclusion**

Inclusion as term has come to be refined in its meaning over the last two decades. Inclusion is now said to be categorised into two sub-types: the first is termed as *regular inclusion* or *partial inclusion*, and the other is called as *full inclusion*. Many scholars, laws and institutions concerned with the issue of inclusion have tried to explain the term Inclusion in its two categories.

According to researchers like Frank Bowe (2005) in a "partial inclusion" setting, students with disabilities are educated in regular classes for almost the whole day, or at least for more than half the day. In this "partial inclusion" setting students with disabilities receive the extra help or special education in the general classroom whenever possible. However most of the specialized services are provided to the students with disabilities outside of the regular classroom, particularly those services which require specialised equipment. Special training which might be disruptive to the rest of the class for instance training in speech therapy are provided in separate Resource Rooms. During such specialized training students with disabilities are taken out of the regular classroom for providing these services. Hence in partial inclusion more intensive instructional sessions are conducted in a resource room which is specialized service in a regular setting. This approach is therefore similar to most mainstreaming practices.<sup>57</sup>

The justification for Partial Inclusion according to opponents of full inclusion such as Jay P Heubert comes from belief that special education services are sophisticated and generally cannot be provided in the normal classroom setting of a full inclusion school. Jay Heubert, an educationist and a Law Professor, has observed that partial inclusion is far more

practicable than full inclusion.<sup>58</sup> According to other scholars students with disabilities are better served outside the mainstream classroom setting for many reasons. Some of these reasons cited by the scholars are :

- special education teachers have higher expectations for their students;
- special education curricula are appropriate for their intended students;
- individualization is more likely to occur in smaller classes with specialized teachers than in the regular classroom;
- regular teachers do not want special needs students in their classrooms; and students with disabilities have never been well-served in regular education, and there is nothing to indicate that teachers are any more able to deal with them now than they were previously.<sup>59</sup>

Robert S Feldman says “Full inclusion is the integration of all students, even those with the most severe educational disabilities, into regular classes and an avoidance of special, segregated special education classes. Teacher aides are assigned to help the children with special needs progress. Schools with full inclusion have no separate special education classes.”<sup>60</sup> But according to many other scholars like Hastings.<sup>61</sup> Oakford, Kavale, Praisner<sup>62</sup> and others full inclusion is a controversial practice and it is not widely applied.

Thus definition of inclusion normally implies full inclusion. But while many use the terms inclusion and full inclusion interchangeably, some seek to make distinctions. According to Rogers full inclusion means "that instructional practices and technological supports are presently available to accommodate all students in the schools and classrooms they would

otherwise attend if not disabled"<sup>63</sup> According to many advocates of full inclusion, it is very rarely, if ever, appropriate for a special education student or student with disabilities to be outside the mainstream classroom setting. They say that such a remaining out of the classroom will defeat the purpose of Inclusion. However another section of inclusion supporters believe that many contingencies and situations make such an "absolutist" approach dangerous and irresponsible. These advocates hold that the unique nature of individual disabilities, the situation and context of a school, the capacity of teachers in terms of training and experience, and the availability of resources and facilities all have a bearing on the level of inclusion that can be practiced in a school or a classroom. But all the proponents of Inclusion are united that all schools should be moving toward the greater inclusion of students with disabilities into mainstream classroom settings.

According to SEDL (1995) "Perhaps the strongest argument for greater inclusion, even full inclusion, comes from its philosophical/moral/ethical base. This country was founded upon the ideals of freedom and equality of opportunity. Though they have not been fully achieved, movement toward their fuller realization continues. Integration activists point to these ideals as valid for those with disabilities, too. Even opponents agree that the philosophical and moral/ethical underpinnings for full inclusion are powerful."<sup>64</sup> Further, Lieberman (1992) has also pointed out that full integration or full inclusion is more attractive .

Jay Heubert (1994) has also suggests that on many counts both the proponents and opponents of inclusion agree. For instance he says that there is general agreement that, with properly trained staff and necessary facilities and support, the students with mild disabilities could better benefit in regular classrooms. Jay Heubert (1994) who has written

extensively has also outlined some of the major philosophical assumptions that proponents and opponents hold relative to their attitudes about inclusion. According to him those who favor greater inclusion view labeling and segregation of students with disabilities as bad. He further says that they do not view those with disabilities as distinctly different from others, but rather limited in certain abilities (everyone simply has strengths and weaknesses that vary from person to person). Thus according to these proponents of inclusion, segregated special education services are very expensive, disjoint, and inefficient. They believe that many who have been identified as being disabled are actually not disabled at all. They also believe that those students who are disabled can be best served in mainstream classes because:

- teachers who have only low-ability students have lower expectations;
- segregated programs tend to have "watered-down" programs;
- students in segregated programs tend not to have individualized programs;
- students in segregated programs tend to stay in segregated programs;
- most regular education teachers are willing and able to teach students with disabilities; and
- the law supports inclusive practices.

### **Alternatives to Inclusion**

Inclusion is not the only way of providing education to the students with disabilities. Students with disabilities when not included are either mainstreamed (placed in general schools with Resource Rooms) or segregated (placed in special schools).. The Students with physical



disabilities who are mainstreamed attend some general education classes usually for less than half the day, and far less academic work. rigorous classes. But students with intellectual disabilities who are mainstreamed attend physical education classes, art classes and story telling classes and usually are assigned to resource room for specialized training. Students with disabilities who are segregated do not attend any classes with non-disabled students. They are generally confined to the special schools. Severely disabled and ill students are also confined to a hospital for treatment and specialaided training or tutoring services are provided in such institutions as the hospitals. Sometimes the other alternative which is also often used especially by very rich is that of home schooling of students with disabilities.

Thus the alternatives to Inclusion in education are mainstreaming of special needs students in general schools, or segregation in special schools or excluding the student from school any kind of school altogether.

In summary with regard to mainstreaming, integration and Inclusion, it can be said that mainstreaming generally refers to the physical placement of students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers and is under the assumption that those with disabilities are to be accommodated with relatively minimal modifications. Integration is primarily seen as a legal term connoting the actual assimilation of different groups together (disabled and non-disabled), rather than just the facilitation of physical proximity. Inclusion on the other hand is seen as the most advanced and better and a more popular approach in education wherein there is a wholistic approach to educate all children, to the greatest possible extent, together in a regular classroom setting. Generally the proponents of Inclusion concede that usual inclusion differs from the term full inclusion

in that it also allows for alternatives other than the regular classroom when more restrictive alternatives are thought to be more appropriate.

### **Principles of Inclusive Education**

Inclusive education is based on the philosophy of Inclusion which holds that society is one and every individual is an equal member of the society and hence a right not to be excluded from general educational setup and not to be excluded from it. The Inclusion philosophy is based on the basic premise that all in the society have equal rights and have therefore to be treated without discrimination and with respect and dignity whatever may be the individual's personal or subjective conditions, abilities, views, etc. thus Inclusive Education which is based on the Inclusion philosophy follows certain fundamental principles which are:

- That every student has an inherent right to education on basis of equality of opportunity.
- That no student is excluded from, or discriminated within education on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability, birth, poverty or other status.
- That all students can learn and benefit from education.
- That schools adapt to the needs of students, rather than students adapting to the needs of the school.
- That the student's views are listened to and taken seriously.
- That the individual differences between students are a source of richness and diversity, and not a problem.
- That the diversity of needs and pace of development of students are addressed through a wide and flexible range of responses.

Thus it is an established practice that students in an inclusive classroom are placed with their peer group or age-mates. This is essential to encourage a sense of belonging, among the peers and to foster an atmosphere of friendships. Teachers in particular are responsible to ensure that a relationship between a student with special needs and a peer without special needs develops to the advantage of both and the society at large. The practice of assigning of an accomplice often termed as the “buddy” to accompany a student with special needs at all times within the school premises also helps foster a closer relationship between the two categories of the students and helps in making inclusion real and useful.

According to an agency SEDL “Inclusion is not a new concept in education. Related terms with a longer history include mainstreaming, integration, normalization, least restrictive environment, deinstitutionalization, and regular education initiative. Some use several of these terms interchangeably; others make distinctions. Admittedly, much of the confusion over the issue of inclusion stems from the lax usage of several of these related terms when important differences in meaning exist, especially among the most common-mainstreaming, integration, inclusion, and full inclusion.

Mainstreaming and other, older terms are sometimes associated primarily with the physical assimilation of students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers. This may be more a matter of "connotative baggage" rather than intent. Nevertheless, mainstreaming assumes that students with disabilities may share the same physical space (classroom, playground, etc.) with those who have no disabilities only when they are able to do the same activities as everyone else with minimal modifications. Further, the primary responsibility for these students' education remains with their special education teacher.”<sup>65</sup>

## **Practice of Inclusive Education**

According to the supporter of Inclusion “The practice of developing inclusive education and inclusive educational institutions involves the following:

- Understanding inclusion as a continuing process and not a one-time event or happening.
- Strengthening and sustaining the participation of all students, teachers, parents and community members in the work of the inclusive education institution.
- Restructuring the societal values, cultures, policies and practices both within inclusive education institution as well as outside to respond to the diversity of students in a given locality. Inclusive approach focuses on identifying and reducing the barriers to learning and participation, and avoids focussing on the "special" about the individual student or group of students, and targeting services to address their needs or problem.
- Providing an appropriate and accessible curriculum, appropriate training programs for teachers, and also for all students, the provision of fully accessible information, environments and support.
- Identifying and providing support for staff as well as students with the view to make inclusion in education a success.

There are several important factors which determine the success of inclusive education:

- Family-school partnerships
- Collaboration between general and special educators

- Well-constructed Individualized Education Program plans
- Team planning and communication
- Integrated service delivery
- Ongoing training and staff development

This is and can be achieved through various techniques like:

- Games designed to build relationships and team work
- Involving students in solving problems and helping each other
- Songs, stories and books that encourage a feeling of togetherness
- Openly and directly dealing with individual differences
- Assigning various jobs in the classroom to encourage community spirit
- Utilizing various infrastructure of the school including the physical therapy equipment such as standing frames, so that the students who use wheelchairs can stand and actively participate in activities with other students.”<sup>66</sup>

### **Benefits of Inclusive Education**

Stainback, Stainback, and Bunch (1989) criticized the special education system exclusively meant for the disabled students as inefficient. They suggested that schools were organized on a separate system for their students with disabilities and for their students without disabilities. They opined that such a dual system caused “considerable time, money, and effort ... to determine who is 'regular' and who is 'special' and into what 'type' or category of exceptionality each 'special' student fits. This continues to be done in spite of the fact that a combination of professional opinion and research indicates that classification is often done unreliably, that it stereotypes students, and that it is of little instructional value.”<sup>67</sup>

They also questioned the logic behind determining who is 'regular' and who is 'special' and into what 'type' or category of exceptionality each 'special' student would fit. This approach has been continued for long as has been observed not only by scholars but by all concerned with the education. The classification of students into regular and special is often done unreliably and this has unfortunately stereotyped students into special and normal and that has had hardly any instructional value.

According to some other scholars like M Will a dual system leads to lack of coordination and of accountability in the schooling system. They also point out the communication problem between special teachers and regular classroom teachers, resulting in a lack of coordination between ongoing classroom instruction and the specially designed remedial instruction even in schools where there are Resource rooms and where there is partial inclusion.<sup>68</sup>

Stainback, Stainback, and Bunch, and others have stated that the dual system of general and special schools do not adequately prepare students with disabilities for facing the problems of the real world outside the school where there is no such segregation. As a matter of fact they state that dual system of education works to the great disadvantage of the disabled students when they are to be placed for jobs after schooling. They state that the segregated education with limited interactions between those with disabilities and those with no disabilities further handicaps the inclusion of special education students in the society at a later stage. Their criticisms lend credence to the weakness of dual education system with separation of the special education schools from general education schools or separation of the special students within a general education school.

According to Thomas M Skrtic given the weak effects of special education instructional practices and the social and psychological costs of labeling, the current system of special education is, at best, no more justifiable than simply permitting most students to remain unidentified in regular classrooms and, at worst, far less justifiable than regular classroom placement in conjunction with appropriate in-class support services.<sup>69</sup>

Another section of scholarship and L. Ringer and S. Kerr specifically argue that "there is now substantial evidence that most, if not all, children with disabilities, including children with very severe disabilities, can be educated appropriately without isolation from peers who do not have disabilities",<sup>70</sup>

T.J. Lewis has concluded that students with disabilities in inclusive environments "improve in social interaction, language development, appropriate behavior, and self-esteem",<sup>71</sup>

Many of the scholars who have investigated about the positive impact of inclusion on the disabled students have suggested that when regular teachers and special education teachers work cooperatively together in an inclusive setting it leads to raising of students expectations among the disabled students and this in turn helps to raise their self-esteem and give them a sense of belonging. Another argument which is put forth for inclusion of the disabled students into the mainstream or regular/general classes is that, the general students develop positive attitudes towards their disabled peers due to regular interaction. The supporters of inclusion also suggest that such close proximity and interaction among the disabled and on-disabled students helps to develop tolerance of and understanding of the disabled students among the general students and at

times even friendships. Studies conducted by Staub & Peck, (1994-1995) and McGregor (1993) have shown that the general students are far more accepting, understanding, and socially aware of differences between them and the disabled students when they are educated in the inclusive school and classroom settings.<sup>72</sup>

In a study carried out by Jennifer Katz and Pat Mirenda, they have concluded that “A large body of research has identified effective instructional options for inclusive classrooms, including the use of specific educational contexts (e.g., grouping strategies), techniques, curricula, and assessment methods. Use of these strategies appears to facilitate the academic and social success of students both with and without disabilities.”<sup>73</sup> In short most of the scholars have been in favour of encouraging inclusive education of the disabled students.

The present trend of thinking is that Inclusive approach to education all the students is the best approach which benefits all. Inclusive education many claim to have many benefits for all the students. It is said that such education on one hand greatly benefits the students who are disabled or challenged to learn easily and faster and on the other hand helps increase the awareness among the abled students to be more understanding and concerned about those students who are disabled or differently abled. Also since the teachers try to use different ways to teach a lesson for both groups of students in the inclusive learning the education becomes interesting. It is felt that such inclusive teaching benefits all the students in the classroom. Also the students are encouraged to help each other which in turn increases their camaraderie. Socialization through inclusive education in the school helps the students to learn communication skills and interaction skills from each other in an easier and faster manner. Students develop long lasting and impressive friendships from these



interactions in an inclusive setup. . Several proponent have argued that isolating students with special needs from those who do not have any special needs may lower their self-esteem and may reduce their ability to deal with other people in the real world outside the school.

There are several advantages of inclusions where the students with special needs studying along with the other students in the same classroom benefit. Scholarly studies have established that there are positive effects for children with disabilities when placed in inclusive educational settings and have listed reading individualized education program or the IEPs, goal setting, improving communication and social skills, increasing positive peer interactions, many educational outcomes, and post school adjustments as the main areas of benefit for the students with disabilities studying in the inclusive setup. According to R M Gilles “Positive effects on children without disabilities include the development of positive attitudes and perceptions of persons with disabilities and the enhancement of social status with nondisabled peers.”<sup>74</sup>

According to researchers like Bennett, Deluca and Bruns (1997) the positive effects on children without disabilities include the “development of positive attitudes and perceptions of persons with disabilities and the enhancement of social status with nondisabled peers”.<sup>75</sup>

Other studies such as the one by Sale and Carey (1995) have also established the positive effects of inclusion of children with disabilities placed in general education classrooms. The study by Sale and Carey (1995) on inclusion compared integrated and segregated (special education only) preschool students and concluded that children in the integrated sites definitely developed in social skills while similar students who were placed in the segregation actually regressed.<sup>76</sup>

A study by Banerji and Dailey (1995) also showed that positive effects were noted on children with disabilities placed in grades 2 to 5 in an inclusive setup.<sup>77</sup>

Proponents of inclusion believe that inclusion increases the social importance of the students with disabilities. These supporters of Inclusion hold that providing social visibility and social status to the students with disabilities is more important than what they learn or achieve academically. Scholars like Stainback and Stainback say that when the persons with disability are not socially visible such as in general schools then society accords them less status and human dignity. They even go to the extent of saying that even if the non-disabled students are harmed academically to some extent due to the full inclusion of students with disabilities, that the non-inclusion of students with disabilities would still be morally unacceptable. These scholars believe that the little harm done to the education of the non-disabled students is of much less consequence than the social harm caused to students with disabilities by making them less visible in society by denying them their right to be included in the general school setting.<sup>78</sup>

There are scholars like M Trainer who say that a school which fully includes all disabled students feels welcoming to all and even to those who otherwise feel they do not fit into a school setting. It has been found that the students with mental disabilities show an increase in social skills and academic proficiency when placed in the Inclusive School.<sup>79</sup>

In their study scholars like Giangreco, Clonionger and Iverson have noted that inclusion has long-term effects on the non-disabled students because on account of inclusion leading to them having to study with students with disabilities helps them to have a heightened sensitivity to the

challenges that they face later in life such as increased empathy and compassion, and improved leadership skills, which benefits all of society.<sup>80</sup>

According to Douglas Marston combination of inclusion and pull-out (partial inclusion) services has shown to be very beneficial to students with learning disabilities in the area of reading comprehension, and preferential for the special education teachers delivering the services.<sup>81</sup>

Hence it can be concluded that inclusive education can be beneficial to all students in an inclusive classroom namely students with disabilities as also the non-disabled students. Hence R M Gilles has stated that inclusion helps students understand the importance of working together, and fosters a sense of tolerance and empathy among the student body implying thereby that it is a system of education which benefits all the students irrespective of their abilities or disabilities.<sup>82</sup>

### **Criticism of Inclusive Education**

Like everything else the field of inclusive education also has its opponents. Opponents of inclusive education are of the opinion that individual differences among the students in an inclusive educational institution slow the progress of students who do not have any special needs. According to these opponents not only does inclusive education affect the prospects and faster growth of the general students but also creates many problems for teachers. Some critics also argue that inclusive schools are an expensive response as compared to cheaper and more effective special education institutions. They state that the peculiar needs of the disabled or disabled are best served in a special education setting since these students with special needs can be given individualized and

personalized instruction to meet their unique needs. They also hold that special education better helps students with special needs to adjust as quickly as possible to the mainstream of the community.

Since 1994 even though the conference in Salamanca mandated UNESCO with promoting inclusive education,( UNESCO, The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education) the inclusion versus exclusion has been a subject of heated debate. Many parents, educationists and scholars have criticized the practice of inclusion on the ground that some of the students with disabilities require educational approaches and methods which are different from the general classroom approaches and methods. The main arguments of these opponents is that it is not possible to impart two or more totally different educational approaches and methods effectively in the same classroom. The consequence of such an approach they hold leads to failure in imparting education to both the categories of the students, those with and without disabilities. The opponents of inclusion state that the educational progress of students with disabilities is bound to be affected adversely if different approaches are used in the same classroom at the same time and cause the disabled students to fall behind that of students without disabilities. It is also the fact that parents of students without disabilities generally fear that in the process of providing the special needs of students with disabilities in a fully included setting or classroom will lead to diversion of attention and energy away from the students without disabilities in the same class and consequently adversely affect the academic achievements of these students. They hold that in the ultimate all the students will be the sufferers if full inclusion is implemented.

Many parents and educationists are not in favour of students with disabilities being taught in inclusive classrooms and this is on account of some genuine fears they harbor about the efficacy of the notion of inclusion in the practical terms. One of the main reasons for such reservations about Inclusive education, according to Tornillo (1994), the President of the Florida Education Association United, is that inclusion, most often the way it is implemented, leaves classroom teachers without the resources, training, and other supports necessary to teach students with disabilities in their classrooms. Tornillo therefore states that "the disabled children are not getting appropriate, specialized attention and care, and the regular students' education is disrupted constantly." He further justifies his opposition to the notion of Inclusion on the grounds that inclusion does not make does not solve the problem of developing higher academic standards and to improve the academic achievement of students as is desired by the governments, state legislatures and the public at large.

It is in these circumstances that Lieberman (1992) has stated that "We are testing more, not less. We are locking teachers into constrained curricula and syllabi more, not less. The imprint of statewide accountability and government spending [is increasingly] based on tangible, measurable, tabulatable, numerical results ... The barrage of curriculum materials, syllabi, grade-level expectations for performance, standardized achievement tests, competency tests, and so on, continue to overwhelm even the most flexible teachers."<sup>83</sup>

According to Tornillo (1994) in an inclusive setting the teachers are required to direct inordinate attention to a few students with disabilities and thereby decrease the amount of time and energy directed toward the rest of the class made up of students without disabilities. He says that the

range of abilities is just too great for one teacher to adequately teach in a class full of students with so many differing abilities. Therefore he says that a teacher cannot be accountable for greater academic achievement and cannot be held responsible.

In a survey conducted by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) in West Virginia and reported by Leo (1994) it was noticed that "78 percent of respondents think disabled students won't benefit from [inclusion]; 87 percent said other students won't benefit either". It is due to such finding that organizations and opponents like the AFT have demanded that governments should go slow on Inclusive education, especially toward full inclusion. The opponents like Sarah Sklaroff (1994) are extremely concerned that students with disabilities would be "monopolizing an inordinate amount of time and resources and, in some cases, creating violent classroom environments".<sup>84</sup> These scholars further state that when inclusion efforts fail, it is frequently due to "a lack of appropriate training for teachers in mainstream classrooms, ignorance about inclusion among senior-level administrators, and a general lack of funding for resources and training" . Another concern of the opponents like Tornillo, (1994), Leo, (1994) and Sklaroff, S. (1994) is a suspicion that school management's intentions for moving toward more inclusive approaches are more based on budgetary (cost-saving) considerations than on any real concern for what is really best for students. Such unscrupulous School Managments believe that if students with disabilities can be educated in regular classrooms, then the more expensive special education costs arising out of employing additional special personnel, equipment, materials, and classrooms, can be reduced. This has made Sklaroff (1994) to comment that "But supporters [argue] that, while administrators may see inclusion as a means to save funds by lumping

together all students in the same facilities, inclusion rarely costs less than segregated classes when the concept is implemented responsibly"<sup>85</sup>

Also the supporters of the regular education also concerned about the hurried movement toward full inclusion by the governments. Many of the parents, scholars and special educators have expressed serious reservations in many parts of the world in rushing into inclusive education. Many organizations such as the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), as also many special educators, parents, and other advocates for the disabled, have been strongly endorsing the continuation of the services for students with disabilities as provided in the mainstreaming setup and special education setup. They have been urging that facilities for the disabled, including various placement options besides the regular classroom, must be suited for the specific needs of the individual students while implementing inclusion.

Most of the opponents are concerned not so much about inclusion as with full inclusion which they fear may prove detrimental to all the included students. Many parents of children with disabilities and others opponents of inclusion have therefore been expressing serious reservations about inclusive educational practices. Their main concerns are to get appropriate educational services for the students with disabilities. They are also mostly worried about the attempts to shift primary responsibility for the education of the students with disabilities from special education teachers to regular classroom teachers who according to them are untrained and ill-equipped to handle such a complex situation. Their fear is that by dispersing students with disabilities and special needs across different school campuses and districts the services and resources actually earmarked for the students with disabilities will be "diluted," and schemes will be watered down and consequently the benefits will be

drastically reduced or even lost out for the really needy students with disabilities. On account of such fears and possibilities special education advocates have been propagating that educational programmes for the students with disabilities in a regular classroom setting may not be totally appropriate for students with disabilities. Many scholars such as Skrtic, (1991) have been skeptical about the present overall, broad-based capacities and attitudes of teachers and school systems toward accommodating students with disabilities into regular classrooms. Their main argument is that the special education system emerged precisely because of the inability of the general schools to adapt the teaching in their regular classrooms to the needs of the students with disabilities.

Apart from the generalized concern raised by those in the field of special education many NGOs and disability groups have also questioned the manner in which the practices of Inclusion have been operationalized in schools. Some scholars like Cohen (1994) have even suggested that inclusion may not be appropriate for students with hearing impairments. He notes that "communication among peers is crucially important to the cognitive and social development for all children". However, because "most deaf children cannot and will not lip-read or speak effectively in regular classroom settings ..., full access to communication-and therefore full cognitive and social development-includes the use of sign language". Cohen also points out that greater intellectual gains are made by deaf students enrolled in schools for the hearing impaired, where a common language and culture may be shared, than for similarly disabled students in mainstream classroom settings where there are difficulties in communication. Scholars and educationists who are opposed to full inclusion have stated that even with interpreters in the classroom the inclusion of the deaf does not much benefit the deaf students. These



scholars say that social, emotional, and even academic development is difficult when communication is facilitated through an interpreter. Their main argument is that Informal communications and friendships with peers, participation in extracurricular activities, dating, etc. are usually not well-facilitated when there is a third-party interpreter used for communication between the different students in the inclusive settings. It is this difficulty that has led the scholars to argue that the better option is to place students who are hearing impaired in a residential school with a "community" of others similarly deaf students.

Scholars like Lieberman (1992) have pointed out that even parents of students with learning disabilities have expressed significant concerns about the hurriedly moving toward inclusion. The concerns of the parents and educationists are based on the past experience wherein they had to fight for a long time to get the basic and appropriate services and programs for the children with disabilities. According to these opponents of Inclusion students with learning disabilities do not progress academically unless they are accorded individualized attention towards their educational needs. They point out that whatever good facilities that have been available to the students with disabilities came to be evolved and provided primarily through the special education approach with specialized teacher working with the students with disabilities either individually or in small groups, and mostly special schools or in resource room settings. The proponents of Special education both the parents of the disabled children and the professionals hold that the regular education teachers have neither the time, nor the expertise to meet the educational and other needs of the students with disabilities placed in their general classrooms. "The learning disabilities field seems to recognize that being

treated as an individual can usually be found more easily outside the regular classroom"<sup>86</sup>

Understandably the parents of students with severe disabilities are greatly concerned about the pressure and difficulties their children will have to undergo to develop basic life skills in a regular classroom setting in order to keep up with the general classroom students who are not disabled. The added fear of the parents of the disabled children of their children being ridiculed by other students is reason enough for them to refrain from sending their children to regular schools..

However these same fears are also expressed by parents of children who are greatly gifted as has been found out by scholars like Tompkins & Deloney (1994). According to Sapon-Shevin (1994) "students who have been identified as 'gifted' or as 'disabled' need not be segregated from others in order to have their needs met, nor dumped with others without differentiation or appropriate treatment". But the parents and other advocates have sought specialized services for their appropriate development.

The latest critics have been those who subscribe to the post-modern and post-structuralist approaches who hold that inclusion is not a good idea. According to these critics relations of power and hierarchy that operate in much inclusive education field adversely affect the students with disabilities when placed in inclusive settings.

The research by various scholars over the last two decades has thrown up the findings which do not clearly endorse the inclusive approach in education. Thus many critics of full and partial inclusion have emerged over the years and these include scholars, educators, administrators and

parents. Among these opponents of both forms of inclusion, namely full and partial inclusion in education there is a growing consensus that Inclusion fails to meet fully the and significantly the special needs of most students who require individualized educational programmes or instruction or highly controlled environments. According to the opponents of Inclusion the classroom situation in which general education classroom teachers are focused on teaching a curriculum while the special education teacher are involved in remediating instruction at the same time, does not augur well for the effective education and training of the children with disabilities. These opponents however do not discount the gain of socialization of the students with disabilities that takes place in an inclusive setting. The opponents hold that while particularly the students with serious inattention problems may be unable to focus in a classroom that contains large number of active children, other suffering from ADHD (Attention Deficient Hyperactivity Disorder) may continually disrupt the general classroom functioning. The opponents however concede that it is the increase of incidence of disabilities in the student population rather than a direct outcome of inclusion as a concept, which teachers have to contend while managing many of the classroom problems with diverse population of students with varying abilities or disabilities.

Opponents of inclusion are of the view that inclusion, and full inclusion in particular, is more of a way for governments and schools to placate the general public and the parents, and is not necessarily a serious attempt at providing the students with appropriate education especially in the light of the fact that such an effort to education students with special needs in the general education environment is an illusive and extremely difficult and impracticable effort. The fact that inclusive education seeks to

provide general education to all students means that there is very little if at all IEP based education provided for the students with disabilities in the general classroom in an inclusive setting. This lack of individualized services for students needing IEPs when placed in an inclusive settings is one of the strongest points of argument by the opponents of inclusion to oppose full inclusion. The approach of mainstreaming with Resource Rooms is the least such opponents can accept when there is talk of educating the students with disabilities in an environment which seeks to provide societal and social acceptance of students with disabilities.

Most scholars and educationists hold that schools do not prepare general education teachers for students with special needs, and hence achievements in inclusive setting are low especially for the students with disabilities. The practice among the inclusive school for different reasons such as expounding inclusive philosophy for political or publicity reasons or for reaping benefits financial and infrastructural from the governments, and thereby do away with any valuable pull-out services or avoid Resource Rooms in favour of full inclusion on behalf of the disabled students who have any say in the matter, could ultimately work towards the great detriment of the students with disabilities say the opponents of such inclusion.

In view of this many opponents of Inclusion view Inclusion as a practice which is philosophically attractive but impractical and hence do not agree to this practice being adopted as a universal model despite agencies like UNESCO and others having propagated it on the grounds of ethics, philosophy and rights. They have therefore challenged the so-called advantages of full or partial inclusion. The opponents hold that the "push in" services in the inclusive setting do not allow students with moderate to severe disabilities the benefits of individualized instruction or IEPs

which are generally provided in mainstreamed schools with resource rooms or in special schools, and which show considerable achievement in learning and emotional development of the students with disabilities.

Many parents of disabled students are also increasingly opposing Inclusive education for their children because of fears that their disabled children will be ridiculed by other non-disabled students, and consequently they feel that their children with disabilities will be unable to develop regular life skills in a general education classroom. This has been the main reason according to many scholars why parents of the disabled students are cautious or slow and even reluctant about placing their children in an inclusive education schools and classrooms.

A further criticism against Inclusive education is that inclusive schools are not a cost-effective response as compared to cheaper or more effective approaches such as special education. The opponents of inclusion argue that special education conducted in special education school settings is better able to provide the special needs of the students with disabilities by providing individualized and personalized instruction through IEPs and thus meet their unique and specific needs. The opponents of the Inclusion aver that segregated Special Education, rather than Inclusive General Education is better able to help students with disabilities to adjust quickly to the community and the society at large. The opponents of the Inclusion do not agree with the proponents counter that students with special needs are not fully into the mainstream of student life because they are secluded to special education. While the proponents of Inclusion argue that isolating students with special needs may lead to the lowering of their self-esteem and may also reduce their ability to deal with other people, the opponents do not agree that Inclusion is the only way of increasing the self-esteem or ability to deal

with others. The argument of the proponents that keeping the students with disabilities in separate classrooms will deny them the opportunity to undergo the struggles and achievements and help them realize that they can make it together in life along with the others. The opponents of the Inclusion model rather hold that the pushing of the the students already affected with disabilities into a general setting could only further compound their problems and may even have serious and adverse consequences. The opponents of Inclusion have been saying that mainstreaming or partial inclusion rather than full inclusion is the better option and cite the findings of the studies which have indicated that mainstreaming in education of the partial inclusive type has long-term benefits for students rather than full inclusion. The opponents of Inclusion hold that thus far no clear evidence has surfaced that Inclusion is a far superior option in all respects and especially in respect to the education and training of the students with disabilities. The opponents of inclusion hold that the benefit of inclusion have not yet been proved beyond doubt in all situations and hence cannot be propagated as the method that should be made universally applicable.

## **Conclusion**

According to the notion of Inclusion, Inclusive education is concerned with the education of all children in mainstream general schools and general classrooms. In present times inclusive education is viewed much more than a mere education in the context of disability or 'special educational needs'. It is rather viewed as an education which is more in keeping with the changes in the social and political climate in a world where everyone is bestowed with the same rights and priveleges. Hence Inclusive education is considered as a new perspective or approach which characterizes a new and correct way of thinking about disabilities and the

education of the disabled persons wherein the students with disabilities are not to be discriminated against by closeting them in segregated settings but must be brought into the mainstream of education and societal life. Increasingly there is a belief that the society must nurture, develop and use the skills, talents and strengths of all its members including those who are disabled and ensure their full participation in the educational and social fields of life if ultimately a society is to be one of peace, equality and justice. The full benefits of an inclusive society can only be realized if the same begin at the earliest contact with the society which is education system put in place by the society. The philosophy of rights has been at the root of pushing inclusion for all and especially for those who suffer from disabilities. The human society, through its world level fora such as UNESCO, have come to enunciate a new outlook and change in thinking in recent times which has increasingly emphasised every learners' rights as well needs to get an education free from discrimination and segregation and it has specifically extended this to the students with disabilities.

On account of this new philosophical and ethical orientation in the understanding of the rights of the persons with disabilities a desire to provide a new non-discriminatory environment has caused definitive changes in policies and laws, both nationally and internationally with the lead being taken by UN and its bodies like UNESCO. In a new perspective of rights of the disabled the idea of inclusion has been given precedence over segregation and discrimination. The old ideas of segregation and alienation of the disabled has been rejected and outlawed. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which was passed in 1989 has clearly set out children's rights in respect of freedom from discrimination and in respect of the representation of their wishes and

views. The UNESCO Salamanca Statement of 1994 accordingly called on the governments of all nations to give the highest priority to inclusive education in their national education policy frameworks.

However in the debate on Inclusion many issues and questions have come to be debated. Questions like what is inclusive education, whether inclusive education is the real answer to the problem of the education of the disabled and so on have been at the core of the debate ragging on the issue of education for all. It has come to be clarified that the Inclusive education differs from previous notions of ‘integration’ and ‘mainstreaming’, which were said to be more concerned with disability and ‘special educational needs’ and which had hoped for learners changing or becoming ‘ready for’ being accommodated in the mainstream education. This was famously termed as mainstreaming of the disabled. In a complete reversal, inclusive education was propagated as the child’s right to participate in a general school and the duty of all schools permit participation of all the students irrespective of their abilities or disabilities. The new Inclusive mantra sought to

- reject segregation or exclusion of learners for any reason – ability, gender, language, care status, family income, disability, sexuality, colour, religion or ethnic origin;
- maximise the participation of all learners in the community schools of their choice and in their immediate neighbourhood;
- make learning more meaningful and relevant for all, particularly for the students who were most likely to excluded from mainstream education namely the disabled;



- rethink and restructure policies, curricula, cultures and practices in schools and learning environments in a manner in which diverse learning needs of all the students could met.

Over the last two decades in particular the achievement of the ideal of inclusion has meant schools changing their previous general setting through improvement of the educational system for all students including the disabled ones. Changes in the curriculum, changes in how teachers teach and how students learn, as well as changes in how students with and without special needs/disabilities interact with and relate to one another have now taken centre stage in the recent times and in the debate of education for all. Inclusive education is now projected as a new way of teaching all the students and to achieve this end change in culture of present schooling system by laying greater emphasis on active learning, authentic assessment practices, applied curriculum, multi-level instructional approaches, and increased attention to diverse student needs and individualization or customization has come to be the new hallmark of education for all philosophy. The moves are afoot to convert the traditional general schools into centers of learning and education where they become caring, nurturing, and supportive educational communities in which the needs of all students and teachers are truly met through an inclusive philosophy and approach. In the new educational philosophy and culture called as the Inclusive education, schools and educational institutions are to provide "regular education" and "special education" at the same time wherein all students are able to learn together. These new Inclusive education schools and institutions are open to all students, and are meant to ensure that all students learn and participate together and no segregation is acceptable.

In conclusion it can be said that Inclusive Education means a setup in which the teachers, schools and educational systems change appropriately so that they can effectively accommodate the differing needs of the students and thus ensure that every student is included in all aspects of school-life. Inclusive education entails both identifying all kinds of barriers to Inclusive education and removing them to make education easy and accessible for all irrespective of their abilities or disabilities. Hence in principle and practice Inclusive education is a process of enabling all students, including those who were previously excluded, to learn and participate effectively within mainstream school systems. It is considered as an appropriate educational philosophy and practice suitable for the changing and advancing human society and is meant to push the concept of social justice at a new and higher plane.

## **History of Inclusive Education**

### **Introduction**

That Inclusive education has been the latest trend in the field of Education during the last two decades is an undeniable fact. Though the term inclusive education has been in vogue for past few decades and though the education for children with special needs along with the general students has been spoken of strongly in recent times the attempts to educate the disabled goes back a few centuries. It would be worth looking at the history of educating the children with disabilities or as they are now called children with special needs.

### **History of Inclusive Education in the World**

The earliest attempts and experiences towards trying to educate the disabled persons were witnessed in Europe. Pedro Ponce de León (1578) in Spain created the first documented experience about education of deaf

children. However these children with disabilities were from the nobility. Abbé Charles Michel de l'Épée (1760) in Paris created the “Institut pour sourds” (Institute for deaf) and began the education of the disabled who were previously not considered for education. Louis Braille invented “Braille script” (1829) which has come to play a vital role in the education of the blind persons since then. Jean Marc Gaspard Itard (1774-1838) who was French physician and educator Jean Marc Gaspard another Frenchman have also been credited with pushing for the education of the disabled in France during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was Itard was one of the earliest teachers to argue that special teaching methods could be effective in educating disabled children. Between 1801 and 1805, Itard used systematic techniques to teach a disabled boy, named Victor, how to communicate with others and how to perform daily living skills, such as dressing himself.

Similarly, the 1848 French psychologist Edouard Séguin, who had studied with Itard, after his migration to the United States developed several useful and practical guidelines for educating children with special needs including for students suffering from Mental retardation. Seguin's education programs focussed on the importance of developing independence and self-reliance in disabled students by training them in various physical and intellectual tasks. Edouard Seguin has been credited for developing the physiological method in which Sensory training , Focus on touch, Utilization of material, Motor training, Age appropriate activities, simple to complex functional activities, Work and play, etc were give much significance.

Another French educationist, Ovide Decroly (1871-1932) has very aptly commented that *“The school will be located wherever is the*

*nature, wherever life is, wherever the work is"* Consequently Decroly founded a school for children with mild disabilities (behavioral disorders, learning disabilities, light mental retardation) in 1901. He subsequently invented and developed the pedagogy for the students with disabilities and in 1907 founded a school for "ordinary" children with the same pedagogy.

Originally in America the persons with severe disabilities were thought to be "un-teachable" and not worthy of any education and were therefore placed in institutions where they had little or no contact with other people who had no disabilities. But gradually the realization began to come that the disabled needed a better deal and so gradually the persons with disabilities were moved into public schools though they had to attend classes in another building or in a separate classroom, with little or no contact with other students without disabilities. The resistance of the parents often led to problems of teaching the disabled students in general schools and so it paved the way for the special schools only for the disabled.

In the late 1700s the idea of educating people with disabilities was introduced it was only in 1817 the realistic programmes came to be started when the American Asylum for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb was opened in Connecticut. This then led to the development of other programs for people with disabilities, such as the New England Asylum for the Education of the Blind and the Experiential School for Teaching and Training Idiotic Children.

The next level of realization came when compulsory school attendance laws were passed in the early 1900s, in which many students with disabilities were "exempted" from such mandatory attendance

requirement because it was believed that their special needs would interfere with their education and the education of others. On account of several reasons and factors ( such as the mere presence of children with disabilities being considered as a threat to “normal children.” and the belief that the students with disabilities were not welcome in regular classrooms) students with disabilities came to be isolated into special classrooms. Soon the idea of special education for the disabled took firm roots and came to be reinforced over the years through policy formulation and educational legislation. This new bifurcation of education into a dual system of education led to the belief and even practice that “special” teachers who had “special training” were needed to teach these “special” students in “special classrooms.” And hence, the students with disabilities were considered to have no place in regular schools and hence were not accepted as a part of general education setup.

This situation continued during the 1950s and 1960s, and special classrooms and special schools became the norm for educating the students with disabilities. Educating the student with disabilities in regular schools was almost viewed as an aberration and not as a norm. However in 1954, in a case called *Brown v. The Board of Education*, the US Supreme Court ruled that black children could not be segregated because of their race. This Court verdict forced the parents of children with disabilities to think about the segregation of their own children in schools and soon this led to formation of advocacy groups by the parents to improve the opportunities for their children and to procure the rights of their disabled students to get education for their disabled wards in the general schools. Many court cases came to be filed in order improve institutions and to assure that students with disabilities could receive a free public education just like any other child.

In the 1960s, American public schools were witnessing several new challenges. This was the time when the civil society had become proactive and debated the issues of social and economic inequality which led to national debate on issues of segregation. The landmark judgment off the US Supreme Court in 1954 in the case *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* decision had a direct impact on the issue of education. At this time US was led by its dynamic and young President John F. Kennedy who felt that greater involvement was necessary on the part of the government to stimulate action and ensure the enforcement of the promise of public schooling based on the principle of social justice and equality. This new awakening in the US affected not just the restructuring of schools but also the re-classification and re-categorization of students.

During the 1960s USA witnessed on one hand a greater concern for the rights and education of the students with disabilities and helped further development and evolution of special education. This period saw rapid expansion in number of programs offered and students served, though the special educators held that very numbers of students with disabilities were served well.

This period also saw the emergence of learning disabilities as a recognized category of disability and caused efforts to identify children with disabilities and to link of disability with poverty, cultural deprivation, and minority status. Programmes, policies and laws for special education services came to be framed and implemented. The number of residential institutions for the people with disabilities also increased but there was also severe overcrowding in these special residential schools for the disabled and this in turn soon led to a new debate whether

segregated schools and special settings were the best way for educating students with disabilities.

Special education field developed in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s under the leadership of President Dwight D. Eisenhower and President John F Kennedy when laws to facilitate education of the students with special needs were made. These laws led to the rise of professional and advocacy groups, like International Council for Exceptional Children (ICEC) which was later renamed as the Council for Exceptional Children. The National Defense Education Act, allowed encouraged “categorical support for education of the handicapped.”

One of the most important laws termed as the “Education of All Handicapped Children Act: came to be passed in USA in 1975. This law later was renamed as the “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act”, or IDEA. The last two laws in the US held that no child with a disability can be denied a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Thus by late 1970s and the early 1980s large number of students with milder disabilities were attending regular education classes in general schools at least for part of the day. This soon came to be termed as “mainstreaming.”

But some people soon began to question why students with severe disabilities were kept segregated in the public school building and not allowed to mingle with other students. This gave rise to the desire to explore ways in which all students could be kept together wherein the students with even severe disabilities could spent all their time with their peers without disabilities in regular classrooms. Thus this attempt is led towards “integrating” students with severe disabilities into the mainstream education.

However as the 1980s came to close many schools began to again question why students with disabilities were still primarily viewed as special education students and not just students of the school. The schools in the US over the years realized that it was possible to make the regular education and special education teachers to work together in the regular classrooms and effectively meet the educational needs of all students. The schools and educationists in the USA thus began to explore the ways to provide for a more enriching learning experience for all students, and thereby break down the artificial barriers between students with differing abilities. This movement to provide specialized services to students within the regular classroom while minimizing any separation of students based on different learning needs came to be called as “inclusion” or “inclusive education”. It is believed that the real impetus for the movement towards Inclusive education came after the enactment of the laws in Education for all Handicapped Children Act 1975 and particularly after it was termed as IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ) in 1990 and its subsequent amendment in the USA.

The end result of this is that today many schools in the USA include all students with disabilities in regular education classrooms and this form of education has been now officially recognized as Inclusive Education. In this latest model of education for all the special education and regular education teachers work together to provide the best possible education for students with all types of needs. This inclusive education is being achieved by modifying or changing the curriculum to meets the needs of every learner and the students with disabilities are now educated in regular education classrooms. This form of education where all students study in the same classroom in an inclusive setting is gradually catching on but has still not been universally accepted.



Like in the US also in Europe by the late 1950s the categorisation of people with disabilities into separate groups and their institutionalisation also began to be questioned. In the Scandinavian countries, especially Denmark and Sweden the concept of normalization was first developed. According to Wolfensberger (1972) normalisation was “Utilisation of means which are as culturally normative as possible, in order to establish and/or maintain personal behaviours and characteristics which are as culturally normative as possible.”<sup>87</sup>

In Europe too such segregation of students with disabilities came to be considered both as artificial and counter-productive. Thus the European countries too began to transfer students with disabilities from the special education setting or institutions to the mainstream settings and attempted their integration into normal community settings. The process of inclusion came to be termed as “normalization” in the North European context but its intentions were similar to inclusion namely to make maximum use of the regular school system with a minimum resort to separate facilities for the students with disabilities. Thus European attempts at “normalization” gave rise to the concept of integration and subsequently to inclusion. Today in Europe under the aegis of European Union most of its member countries have moved towards integration and inclusion. The UK and France who had a long association with education for the disabled had been very active in providing special educational needs (SEN) of the students with disabilities particularly from the 1990s onwards. Germany too has been trying to bring about integrated education. Under the EU each of the member countries has freedom to carry out its own educational policies but EU also provides broad

guidelines to the member countries in achieving the education of the disabled. In 2003 EU provided further guidelines to its members to implement inclusive education.

The strongest impetus to the model of education called as Inclusive came from the 1990 “World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs”. This Declaration stated that: Basic education should be provided to all children... To this end, basic education services of quality should be expanded, and consistent measures must be taken to reduce disparities (Article 3.1). UNESCO began to provide wide support to the development of Inclusive education across the world . For instance it prepared resource materials for teachers to achieve knowledge about children with disabilities. (UNESCO (1993). *Special Needs in the Classroom: Teacher Resource Pack*. Paris: UNESCO.) UNESCO also organized conferences and meets to push the agenda of Inclusion the world over (UNESCO (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. World Conference on Special Needs Education Access and Quality, Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994. Paris: UNESCO.) UNESCO also put the model of Inclusive Education on the world agenda. (UNESCO (1998) *Inclusive Education on the Agenda*. Paris: UNESCO.) In 2005 the UNESCO came out with Guidelines for Inclusion. The countries of the world have therefore been gradually adopting the guidelines of the UNESCO in implementing Inclusive Education in their countries. At present most of the countries of the world have acknowledged that Inclusive Education is a universal goal which must be implemented everywhere.

### **History of Inclusive Education in India**

India as country has a rich past with education as a long tradition. The Rig Veda ( the word Veda means” to know.”) speaks of education and the

practices in learning that were appropriate. It was the Gurukuls (Abode of the Teachers or Master-Students Abode) or Rishikulas (Abodes of the Holymen) which were the seats of learning. In this system the students were required to live with their teacher and learn by practicing while also studying and debating. However in this ancient Indian system of education, popularly termed as the guru-shishya parampara students with different abilities were taught together. The problem was that not all the children could take the benefit of this system due to reasons like poverty or cast.

The Vedic period was followed by the Brahmanical period which made education a privilege of the few but the subsequent Buddhist period saw the rise of education system through the Viharas or Maths which became the new centers of learning replacing the earlier Gurukuls. After the Arab invasion of India from the West in 712 A.D. by Mohamed Bin Kasim Muslim influence arrived in India and many Madrasas (schools) and Maktabas (schools attached to Mosques) began to provide religious and other education to the Muslims.

The age of colonisation and the coming of the British to India in 1600 led to the gradual introduction of the British model of education in India. In the period after 1835 schools were started based on the English pattern of education often with English as the medium of education. Soon Indian children came to be educated in schools started by the British and the curriculum followed was heavily influenced by British and European systems of education.

However, despite the fact that no special education institutions were started by the British initially, in 1826, Raja Kali Shankar Ghosal started a learning facility for the visually handicapped in Varanasi. Soon thereafter a Special School for the visually handicapped was started in Ambala, Punjab, and the first institute for the deaf and blind in Mumbai

began in India in 1886. In 1918 a special school for the mentally disabled was started in Kurseong, in the Darjeeling region of North Bengal and in 1931 another similar one was started in Travancore in Kerala ( 1931). The Children's Act of 1941 influenced the starting of some schools for the disabled children. At the end of the World War II, the Educational Advisor to the British Government of India, Sir John Sargent prepared a Report called as the Sargent Report in 1944 in which he recommended that persons with handicaps must necessarily form an essential part of the national system of education (Sargent Report 1944). It is only after 1947 after India gained its independence that real efforts at educating the students with disabilities began at a wider level. The Constitution of India was instrumental in giving the necessary impetus to the education of the disabled. The Kothari Commission (1964-66) under the Chairmanship of Mr P.S.Kothari and appointed by the Government of India in 1964, apart from making several recommendations to improve educational system in India, also recommended that children with disabilities must be educated in mainstream schools.

Consequently, the first National Education Policy (NEP) came to be formulated and passed by the Parliament in 1968. However this national Education Policy, despite its great intention to improve education in India, could not be implemented due to serious lack of financial and organizational support.

But on the recommendation of the Kothari Commission, the Government in 1974 formulated the National Policy for Children as well as the National Children's Board. This gave a push to the efforts in the direction of the mainstreaming of the students with disabilities in India. The launch of the Integrated Child Development Program (ICDS) program in 1974, under the Fifth Five Year Plan, was a major milestone in pushing further

the efforts towards the education of the disabled in India. While the primary and initial objectives were to achieve decrease in infant mortality and training of women in health care and nutrition, in 1975 the scope of ICDS was broadened to include a psycho-social component on non formal early childhood education. The subsequent District Primary Education Programme, or DPEP focused on integration in the areas of teacher training, removing architectural barriers and in providing appropriate aids. According to Pandey and Advani (1995), despite these measures at improving education in general, a vast majority of children with disabilities were still not able to get into mainstream education.

The realization by the Government that persons with disabilities have the same right to education as all others led to the focus shifting to the development of services for persons with disabilities. In the process of doing this the Government of India launched a comprehensive Integrated Education for the Disabled Child (IEDC) in 1974 to provide children with moderate disabilities with both, educational facilities and financial support.

Under the Integrated Education for the Disabled Child (IEDC) launched in 1974 over 15,000 schools in 26 states and union territories covering over 65,000 children with disabilities were enrolled in mainstream schools. To further strengthen the implementation of the IEDC project, the Government also launched Project Integrated Education Development (PIED), wherein teacher training, methodology for identification of children and school facilities and support services came to be provided. These developments in the period 1974 onwards marked a major shift in education for the children with disabilities.

However a major lacuna in these endeavours was that it benefitted only those students who were mildly and moderately disabled. Many of those who were in the pre-school stage did not at all benefit by these projects.

Also those students with disabilities who came to be admitted in schools were often not known to be suffering from the disabilities. The greatest injustice was done to children with intellectual disabilities who were not much benefited from these programmes at mainstreaming and so the programmes came to be withdrawn.

But the Central Government did make other efforts such as setting up of the National Institute for Mental Handicap at Hyderabad in 1984 with regional centres and the purpose of the NIMH was to assist in the education of the mentally handicapped/disabled/challenged through research, training of special teachers and many other ways.

However these initial attempts at providing education to the students with disabilities did provide valuable knowledge and learning experience to the educationists and policy makers which fructified into the formulation of Education Policy with inclusive practices. Consequently, in the next stage of thinking in the field of education and educational development, the notions of integration, mainstreaming and inclusion began to take strong roots.

The next stage began in 1986 with the Parliament of India adopting the National Policy on Education (NPE) in which it enunciated for the first time that equality of opportunity as the true goal of education. The National Policy on Education (NPE) was actually a reformulation of the previous National Education Policy (NEP) of 1968. In the NPE of 1986 the phrase “education for the handicapped” was explicitly used. The lacuna however was that the NPE supported the idea of the integration of only children with loco-motor and physical disabilities and students with mild disabilities in mainstream schools.

Under the NPE of 1986 the Government also set up a team of experts under the Chairmanship of Behrul Islam in 1987 in order to study the problems of disabled children. It was the recommendation of this Behrul

Islam Committee which was later instrumental in helping to frame the first comprehensive legislation in the country in 1995 and which came to be termed as The Disability Act of 1995.

In 1990 India became a signatory to the United Nations World Declaration on “Education for All” (EFA) thereby reaffirming the rights of all children including children with disabilities to have full and proper access to education in regular school settings.

Another major development as regards “education as right” occurred in 1992 when the Supreme Court of India in *Mohini Jain v/s State of Karnatak* held that “right to education’ is concomitant to fundamental rights enshrined under Part III of the Constitution’ and that “ every citizen has a right to education under the Constitution”. The Supreme Court again reconsidered the issue in 1993. Supreme Court has, in its judgement in *Unni Krishnan, J.P. Vs. Andhra Pradesh, 1993*, again held that "The citizens of the country have a fundamental right to education. The said right flows from Article 21 of the Constitution. 'This right is, however, not an absolute right. Its Contents and parameters have to be determined in the light of Articles 45 and 41. In other words, every child/citizen of this country has a right to free education until he completes the age 14 years. Thereafter his right to education is subject to the limits of economic capacity and development of the State."

To fulfil its commitment under the UN and to give substance to the Supreme Courts verdicts, the Parliament of India unanimously passed the Constitution 93rd Amendment Bill, on 28th November, 2001, declaring education as a fundamental right for children between the age of 6 and 14. Under this Amendment Act education for children below the age of 6 was made the responsibility of the parents and not the state. However, issues of quality and the definition of "free" were not addressed.

India also had subscribed to the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities of 1993 and to the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action of 1994. The commitments made by India to the UN instruments also logically led to a major shift from integrated schools to ones which were more inclusive. Consequently, in December 1995 the Parliament of India passed a Bill called “The Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation Bill for Persons with Disability” or The Disability Act for short. The Disability Act, in its Chapter V on Education mandates that every child with disability should have access to free and adequate education.

In 1999, the Government of India passed the National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act for the economic rehabilitation of people with disabilities. This Act of 1999 coupled with the “The Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation Bill for Persons with Disability” or The Disability Act of 1995 have played a major role in bringing about a change in the attitude and perceptions of government, NGOs and others including persons with disabilities towards the rights and education of the persons with disabilities.

The Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (Hindi for Total Literacy Campaign or Education For All) popularly known as SSA was launched in 2001 to ensure that all children in the 6–14 year age-group attend school and complete eight years of schooling by 2010. Through this initiative the Government affirmed its commitment to Education for All (EFA). The preamble to the SSA clearly provides for inclusion of children with disabilities in the normal educational programmes. This programme was aimed at all children in the 6 to 14 age group being able to complete eight years of schooling by the year 2010. The SSA gives importance to



education of “All” and clarifies that “ALL” includes children with disabilities. Evidently the inspiration and foundation for the SSA comes from the UN’s desire to provide “Education for All” which India has endorsed almost a decade earlier.

The UNESCO’s Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to Conclude the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (1993-2002) held from 25-28 October 2002 formulated the Biwako Millenium Framework for Action towards providing an inclusive, barrier free and rights based society for persons with disability. This Declaration on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asia Pacific Region called as the Biwako Millenium Framework for Action has been endorsed by India. The process of “Normalisation” adopted in Europe and America came to be accepted and extended to Asia Pacific region through the Biwako Millenium Framework for Action. The principle to “change the environment to suit the child not the child to suit the environment” (so well stated by Wolfensberger) was to be accepted by all governments and further, all governments were expected to adopt as a matter of law and policy the principle of inclusive education in which “children with special needs must have access to regular schools” and in their own neighbourhoods. In fulfillment of this commitment first the then Minister of Human Resource Development presented a comprehensive statement on the subject of inclusive education of children with disabilities in the Rajya Sabha on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2005 and subsequently the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, of the Government of India circulated a draft National Policy for Persons with Disability on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2005 which then came to be officially adopted and

announced in February 2006 as the National Policy for Persons with Disability .

It is pertinent to note here that focus of the government shifted to the children in general only when the original British period Central Government's Ministry of Education was split into two separate Ministries, namely the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Since the coming into existence of these two Ministries it has been increasingly recognised that the children with disability require specialized care. However while the subject of disability is specifically dealt by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the issues connected with the education of the disabled and educational policies for the persons with disabilities are the domain of the Department of Education in the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) this situation of two Ministries formulating policies for the persons with the disabilities has at times led to dualism and also created ambiguity.

The Constitution of India originally did not explicitly include children with disabilities in the provisions made for education of the children. However, Article 41 in the Directive Principles of State Policy did mention persons with disabilities and required that "the State shall within the limits of its economic development make effective provisions for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness, disablement and in other cases of undesired want". The constitution originally did not mandate the free and compulsory education as a fundamental right and the requirement was just a directive principle to guide state policy. However, Article 45 stated that "free and compulsory education should be provided for all children until they completed the age of 14" The logical conclusion by linking these two articles would suggest that "ALL" also included "children with

disabilities”. However, the constitution did not explicitly and clearly say so. But the Supreme Court of India judgement of 1992 in *Mohini Jain v/s State of Karnatak* that “right to education’ is concomitant to fundamental rights enshrined under Part III of the Constitution’ and that “every citizen has a right to education under the Constitution” and its subsequent endorsement by the Supreme Court in *Unni Krishnan, J.P. Vs. Andhra Pradesh*, 1993, that “The citizens of the country have a fundamental right to education. The said right flows from Article 21 of the Constitution. This right is, however, not an absolute right. Its Contents and parameters have to be determined in the light of Articles 45 and 41. In other words, every child/citizen of this country has a right to free education until he completes the age 14 years. Thereafter his right to education is subject to the limits of economic capacity and development of the State” had compelled the Government to seriously think of giving this matter a constitutional sanction. Therefore in December 2002, through the 86th Amendment Act, Article 21(A) was incorporated, which made the right to primary education part of the right to freedom, stating that the State would provide free and compulsory education to children from six to fourteen years of age. A first draft of the legislation providing for Free and Compulsory Education for Children Bill, 2003, was prepared and posted on website in October, 2003 for public comments and suggestions. Subsequently, taking into account the suggestions received on this draft, a revised draft of the Bill entitled Free and Compulsory Education Bill, 2004, was prepared and again posted on the website. In June 2005 the CAGE (Central Advisory Board of Education) committee drafted the ‘Right to Education’ Bill and submitted it to the Ministry of HRD. MHRD sent it for approval to NAC (National Advisory Council) where Mrs. Sonia Gandhi is the Chairperson. NAC sent the Bill to PM for his observation. On 14<sup>th</sup> June 2006 the Finance Committee and Planning

Commission rejected the Bill citing the lack of funds. However a Model bill was sent to states for the making necessary arrangements.

Meanwhile the National Council for the Protection of Child Rights, an autonomous body came to be set up in 2007 for ensuring the rights of children are protected. Thereafter at the end of many deliberations between the stakeholders, the Union Cabinet finally cleared the Right to Education Bill in 2008. The bill was formally approved by the Union Cabinet on 2 July 2009. Thereafter the Rajya Sabha first passed the bill on 20 July 2009<sup>[9]</sup> and subsequently the Lok Sabha passed it on 4 August 2009. The Bill received Presidential assent and was notified as Act on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2009 as “The Children's Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act” or “The Right to Education” Act. This latest Act came into effect in the whole of India except the state of Jammu and Kashmir from 1 April 2010. The Model Rules and the Guidelines under Section 35(1) of the RTE Act, 2009 have also come to be notified in 2009. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act or Right to Education Act (RTE) 2009, provides for the modalities of the provision of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. After the coming into effect of the RTE Act, India has become one of 135 countries to make education a fundamental right of every child.

The RTE Act makes education a fundamental right of every child between the ages of 6 and 14 and specifies minimum requirements in government schools. It requires all private schools to reserve 25% of seats to children from poor families (which will be reimbursed by the state as part of the public-private partnership plan). The RTE Act also prohibits all unrecognized schools from providing education, and prohibits donation or capitation fees and interviews of the child or parent for

admission. The RTE Act also provides that no child shall be held back, expelled, or required to pass a board examination until the completion of elementary education. There is also a provision for special training of school drop-outs to bring them up to par with students of the same age. The RTE Act requires monitoring of all neighbourhoods, identifying of all children requiring education, and setting up facilities for providing education and educational facilities. According to Sam Carlson, the Education specialist of the World Bank, “The RTE Act is the first legislation in the world that puts the responsibility of ensuring enrollment, attendance and completion on the Government. It is the parents' responsibility to send the children to schools in the U.S. and other countries.” (Carlson S. Presentation at *School Choice: A National Conference* held in Delhi on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2009 ) The most outstanding aspect of this latest law is that under the RTE Act 2009 the Right to Education of persons with disabilities until 18 years of age has also been made a fundamental right.

### **History of Inclusive Education in Goa**

By virtue of Goa being a part of India all the legislations and policies and schemes pertaining to education applicable in the rest of the country also became extended to Goa. Hence all the laws, acts, policies and programmes discussed above are also implemented in Goa either through the Government of Goa or sometimes directly through the Government of India.

The concept of Inclusive Education has come into Goa gradually and the first attempts to implement Inclusive Education in Goa were made by private individuals and some NGOs. Gizelle Lobo of Jyot Society of Parents with autistic children in Goa was amongst the first to draw attention towards inclusive education and resource rooms for the disabled

students in Goa. NGOs such as Sethu, Sangath, NAB Spandan and others were in the forefront of the movement for introducing inclusive education in Goa.

Though the country had already adopted the integrated or inclusive education approach way back in the 1980s with the framing of the National Policy on Education (NPE) and the subsequent Plan of Action in 1992, Goa had been quite slow in implementation of the inclusive education in Goa. Though many special schools beginning with the Goa Government's Sanjay School were established in Goa from 1980s onwards, the Government of Goa has been quite slow in pushing the implementation of the Inclusive Education schools in Goa.

The first attempts at inclusive education began at Chubby Cheeks School at Pilerne, Bardez, Goa in 2005 followed by establishment of Resource Rooms at Holy Cross Schools at Bastora, Goa and Lourdes Convent School at Saligao, Goa. These schools had Resource Rooms which catered to the special education needs of the mentally challenged students. In 2007 Government of Goa came out with grant in aid scheme whereby other schools too started Resource Rooms and began enrolling students with disabilities. Between 2005 and 2010 a total of 12 schools are considered to be schools providing education for the disabled students following the inclusive approach.

## SECTION C

### ABOUT THE STUDY

#### **Purpose of the study**

Children - whatever their disability or learning difficulty - have a part to play in society after school. Education is part of, not separate from, the rest of children's lives. Disabled children can, and are, being educated in mainstream schools with appropriate support. There are many different ways of achieving this. Disabled children have an equal right to membership of the same groups as everybody else. A segregated education restricts that right and limits opportunities for self-fulfillment. People with disabilities or learning difficulties do not need to be separated or protected. An early start in mainstream playgroups or nursery schools, followed by education in ordinary schools and colleges, is the best preparation for an integrated life.

Inclusive education is a human rights issue. Exclusion is a violation of human rights of the disabled. Many more children could be included in the mainstream with benefits to everyone. Disabled adults, describing themselves as special school survivors, particularly in the West, are now demanding an end to segregated education. Segregation in education is exclusion from the mainstream and impinges upon the rights of the differently abled. It puts these disabled persons at a disadvantage in the society.

This description applies to special schools and can also apply to special units in ordinary schools and to pupil referral units when they are run separately from the everyday life of schools, when the students are not members of the appropriate class for their age group and when there is no plan to include them. Time spent out of the ordinary classroom for

appropriate individual or group work on a part-time basis is not segregation. Neither is removal from the ordinary classroom for therapy or because of disruption, provided it is time-limited, for a specified purpose and based on a goal-oriented plan aimed at returning the student to his or her ordinary class. The existence of special schools represents a serious violation of students' human rights.

Parents and carers who have students in separate special schools because local policies make that the only option have to undergo a lot of difficulties due to this segregation. Working towards a de-segregated education system is working towards a better education for all students. The benefits of inclusion apply to all students, disabled and non-disabled alike. Legal enforcement of segregation on the grounds of disability, learning difficulty or emotional need is against international human rights agreements including the UNESCO Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (1994), the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which has increasingly been concerned with including children in mainstream education rather than in segregated 'special schools' UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993) and the UNESCO Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (1994) clearly indicate that the existence of separate 'special' educational provision is only acceptable insofar as mainstream education has not yet developed sufficiently to accommodate all children. In spite of all this inclusive education is still a far cry especially in India. And in Goa Inclusive Education and inclusive schools is not only a very recent development but also a very limited



scale activity. Given this scenario it is imperative that a study such as the present one has been and is extremely relevant and timely.

The present study was intended to study the various aspects concerning the IE in Goa as the same could prove to be helpful in finding the solutions to the problems besetting inclusive education in Goa and make improvements to the inclusive education implementation in Goa. Hence this study is very significant from various standpoints.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The present study entitled “**A Critical Study of Inclusive Education in the State of Goa**” is a first of its kind study conducted in the state of Goa focusing on the problem of Inclusive Education. While there have been many studies on the subject of education including special education in the state of Goa no specific study has been ever conducted on the subject of Inclusive Education. It was not known what the exact situation was as regards Inclusive education in the State of Goa. Moreover no critical analysis had been undertaken or done till date in Goa on the subject of Inclusive Education at all levels. This problem needed to be studied and understood thoroughly. Issues and questions connected with Inclusive Education in the state of Goa were required to be taken up and this present study has done the same.

### **Operational Definitions**

The operational definitions of terms/phrases used in the statement of problem are given below for the sake of clarity and also for delimiting the scope of the study

***Critical study:*** For the purpose of this study critical study means a critic of the present status and practices with regard to inclusive education in

the State of Goa. It covers the advantages and shortcomings of inclusive education in Goa and appropriate suggestions for the improvement of the same will be made.

***Inclusive education:*** This term can be understood and explained in two ways:

***Conceptual Definition :*** Inclusive Education means education of all children/students of diverse groups, including the differently challenged, physically and mentally disadvantaged/disabled, learning together in the same classroom and the curriculum and other facilities/supports services are developed in such a way that the diversity of the children/students can cope with. In such a situation the diverse groups of children/students have opportunity to interact each other, making relationships, developing friendly environments and a mutual understanding which moves towards the social inclusion of disadvantaged/special needs children (challenged/disabled children) in mainstream society from the very beginning. Thus Inclusive Education (IE) is a developmental approach which seeks to address the learning needs of all children, with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to being marginalised and excluded on account of their different disabilities which may be physical or mental.

### ***Operational Definition***

For the purpose of this study inclusive education is that education which is imparted in an inclusive manner for the two types of children/students, namely the normal/regular (i.e students without special needs) and the challenged/disabled(i.e students with special needs) throughout the State of Goa.

***Goa:*** For the purpose of this research Goa means the entire state of Goa.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main aim of this study was to critically analyse the implementation of Inclusive Education in the State of Goa and to achieve this goal the following objectives were taken:

1. To find out the prevalence of disability in the state of Goa
2. To find out the status of enrollment of the disabled students in educational institutions in the state of Goa
3. To study the role of Government towards achieving inclusive education in Goa
4. To study the role of the Non Government Organisations towards achieving inclusive education in Goa
5. To study the activities undertaken by the Inclusive Education schools to achieve inclusive education in Goa
6. To find out the views of those working towards and/or associated with inclusive education in Goa.
7. To find out the attitude of the teachers working in inclusive education schools in Goa.
8. To find out the attitude of the parents of students studying in inclusive education schools in Goa
9. To find out the concerns of the teachers working in inclusive education schools in Goa
10. To find out the level of awareness regarding inclusive education among the Principals of the regular schools in Goa
11. To identify the problems faced by the Managements in inclusive educational institutions in Goa.
12. To conduct indepth case studies of some inclusive schools/educational institutions in the state of Goa

13.To conduct indepth case studies of the disabled students enrolled in the inclusive schools/educational institutions in the state of Goa

### **Area of the Study**

The area of study in the case of this study is broadly education but more specifically ‘Inclusive Education’ Inclusive education is one of the modes of providing education. It is a mode of education which involves providing education to ALL students in one single integrated inclusive education system. (Check with Thesis of Patankar)

### **Limitations of the Study**

The present study was intended to study and analyse the implementation of inclusive education in the state of Goa at various levels. It is essentially a thorough study of the status of inclusive education in Goa intended to look at the various measures adopted to make inclusive education successful in Goa. The study looks at the effectiveness of laws, policies and schemes implemented in Goa by both the Governments and NGOs, facilities provided by the government, issues connected with the teachers involved in inclusive education schools, benefits to the disabled students studying in such inclusive schools/institutions, attitudes among the general and regular teachers in inclusive education schools, attitudes among the parents of the students studying in the inclusive education schools. To achieve this end a thorough study was done by covering all levels of school education in Goa during the period of study. Attention was also focused on inclusive education in institutions of higher learning in Goa which included the colleges and the University.

Thus the study has considered the status of Inclusive Education at practically all levels of educational hierarchy in the state of Goa. The present position of the Inclusive Education in Goa at all levels of

Education has been studied by looking at the operation of the Inclusive Education at school, college and university levels. The focus is more on the Inclusive Education at the school level since the need for inclusion in education is stronger at the entry and initial years which are also the formative years of the young including of the differently disabled (disabled) students. The scope of the study is thus clearly confined to the field of education at the foundational level but is taken to its logical end and hence ends at the highest level of education which is the University.

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The scope of the study is thus clearly confined to the field of education at the foundational level but is taken to its logical end and hence ends at the highest level of education which is the University. The scope of the study is thus to apply it to other states in the country. The findings can be logically extended to other parts of the country. This study will be of great help and useful to the teachers, to the school administrators, government policy-makers, NGO activists and the academic. The study will be useful for making changes to the schemes and to take corrective measures to improve Inclusive education.

The present study has been carried out keeping in mind much of the research that has been done elsewhere. Many of the parameters and aspects of Inclusive Education studies by other scholars have been kept in mind while carrying out this present study. Consequently this study has been able to shed light on the ground situation with regard to Inclusive Education in the State of Goa. It has been able to shed light on not only the status of Inclusive Education in Goa but also on the awareness, opinions, attitudes and concerns about Inclusive Education among the various stakeholders. The important contribution of this study lies in the fact that it has been able to bring to light the real status of Inclusive Education in Goa through a critical approach. This study is intended to help the government authorities, policy-makers and educators in taking appropriate decisions in formulating and implementing inclusive education in the state of Goa. An effective and successful

implementation of inclusive education in the small state of Goa could then prove to be a model for the rest of the country to follow.

### **About the Thesis**

The investigation carried out and the outcome of this research is reported and presented in five chapters in this thesis.

CHAPTER -I deals with a background of the problem, definition of the problem, objectives and delimitations of the study.

CHAPTER -II deals with the review of literature and research which is directly and indirectly related to the present study.

CHAPTER -III deals with the plan and procedure of the study. It contains the method of research, data gathering tools, procedure for analysing the data collected by the tools for the present study.

CHAPTER-IV deals with the analyses and interpretation of the collected data and results of the study.

CHAPTER -V deals with the summary and conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

Lastly the references and bibliography are given and appendices are attached to complete the body of the thesis.

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