# Inclusion: Historical Perspectives, Inclusive Education And Current Status

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## Abstract

Since long time, Inclusion, in one form or the other has been realized as a human concern across globe, but it has gained much significance in recent years. Its evolution has taken various forms in the past to reach the present status. Inclusion-participation of all persons in society in general and particularly in education is essential for development of peoples' potential, welfare and progress to have a cohesive, justiciable, flourishing and progressive society. Disability has been considered as the single most serious barrier to inclusive education across the globe. And hence needs to be explored. This review comprehensibly examines how the evolution of inclusion, special education and inclusive education have emerged along with their current status.

**Method:** Extensive literature published in the recent past indexed in PubMed, Lancet, Google Scholar, Research Gate and other prominent research platforms were explored to develop a synthesis of literature available on the internet regarding how the inclusion has been evolved in the globe, current status of special education and challenges and improvement of inclusion.

**Results:** Various perspectives viewed by pioneers in the past on social events or otherwise have led to evolve the comprehensive concept of inclusion. Various concepts like exclusion, segregation, integration, disability, diversity, special education and lastly inclusive education has been strongly focused worldwide. Better alternative to special education has been in the form of inclusive education.  Education being multi-dimensional, have been found to be lacking in most parts of its services and is a challenging. A number of studies highlighted many limitations of current inclusive education including issues of system, syllabus, curriculum, material resources, teacher counts, attitude and training, sociocultural milieu etc. and hence needs much improvement.

**Conclusion:** Inclusion, a complex concept with its long history of evolution & many perspectives, is based on human needs, that provide justice and right to flourish to everyone including disables. With many limitations and challenges, currently, inclusive education is broadly deficient. Therefore, drastic changes are needed to deeply look at

these and take concrete steps to modify the scenario at multiple levels including curriculum, attitude, infrastructure, society and research.

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## Introduction

Although, all human beings are alike having expectations, desires, motivation, goals, yet everyone has unique system of physical and psychosocial attributes at birth which are further distinctively developed by social milieu. Individual differences have been universally recognized and advocated and for the best integration and outcome of society from time to time, more so now a days. Including all persons irrespective of their socio-economic background, ability, language, culture, religion, ethnicity, race, gender etc. adds to providing value, equality and justice to one and all in all walks of life.

" Inclusion is not a new phenomenon, its origins may be traced back to ancient time" (Amartya Sen, 2020), but the concept evolved steadily in eighteen century, especially during French Revolution and after 1990s. In the process of its evolution, many perspectives like social exclusion, segregation, integration, diversity, disabled, disadvantaged, special education, inclusion education were highlighted distinctively. These perspectives viewed by pioneers in the past on social events or otherwise have led to evolve the comprehensive concept of inclusion. Consequently, there have been sea changes in social, economic and educational system globally. Yet, inclusion is a challenge being a complex concept and also because inclusive practice is not always inclusive and may be in a form of integration or sub-inclusive. The literature has much explored the concept of inclusion till date, but it is viewed that clarity about its multidimensional aspects - manifestation, application & implication, practice, uses, consequences, are still evolving.

## Evolution of Inclusion, Special Education and Inclusive Education

In the ancient times, Inclusion, has been used as a complex ideological construct rather than considered in terms of equality that legitimised the process of the subordination and domination of vulnerable groups in the society. Aristotle explicitly linked richness of human life to the necessity to " first ascertain the function of man," followed by exploring " life in the sense of activity" and pointed out that an impoverished life results from lack of freedom to undertake important activities that a person has reason to choose (Amartya Sen, 2020). In India, the persons with disabilities were given individualized education along with the non-handicapped peers based on the individual child' s needs and age in Gurukulum setting in the communities in the mainstream schools (RCI). In USA, Rousseau (1712-1778) first gave main idea of teaching children in their own pace and abilities, setting the ground for disables - impacting Catholic Church to accept the disables as members of state, although with no provision for their education. They were thought to

be uneducable and useless and their education as a charity issue rather than human rights.

In France, Charles Michel L'Epeé one of the pioneers in the education of disabled, established first public school for people with disabilities in 1760. The first attempts to offer schooling to disabled children aimed at deaf and blind children from nobility and privileged classes. In 1778, the first institution for the " deaf and dumb" was founded in Leipzig. In 1808, the first school for the blind

was established in Berlin. Seventy years later the first schools for children with learning difficulties originated. Subsequently, an era for special education started with work of many scholars like, Valentin Hauy ( with a school for blind in Paris in 1784), the incredible work of Louis Braille (invented a system of reading and writing for visually handicapped in 1825), Friedrich Moritz Hill (developed an oral method of instruction for teaching deaf in 1778,1), Jean-Marc-Gaspard Itard- founder of modern special education (trained & educated the Wild Boy of Aveyron, 1801-1805), the work of Edouard Seguin (pioneer of modern education methods for teaching the severely intellectually disabled children, 1866) and Maria Montessori (scientific pedagogy, 1902).

Adam Smith in the eightieth century pointed out ' relational deprivations or the social exclusion as impoverishing human lives, may result in as both constitutive and instrumental importance, directly impoverish a person' s life, and also, reduce economic, employment or other multiple opportunities that come from social contact' . Often different aspects of capability deprivation and social exclusion may go together. Poverty of living linked to exclusion also received systematic attention in the early empirical works on the quality of life by many pioneering investigators such as William Petty, Gregory King, Amartya Sen and others (Amartya Sen, 2020).   In USA, the roots of inclusion came out of the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, in 1954, the Supreme Court verdict on Brown' s case that, " separate … facilities are inherently unequal" for race, later, extended to children with disabilities on parents fighting in the court  in 1975. This resulted Public Law 94-142 in 1975, now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to end the exclusion of the children from their local public schools (UNICEF). The concept of social exclusion was highlighted distinctively in France by many pioneers including Lenoir (1974), Silver and Wilkinson (1995). The French Enlightenment/Revolution strongly voiced the demands for " liberty, equality, and fraternity" and had profound influence on the development of perspectives on inclusion.  In 1980's, concerns of Advocacy groups raised issue of slow progress of integration in Canada and the USA which led to come about notion of inclusion. (O'Brien and Forest, 2004; Winzer, 2009), first in Canada and then in USA and UK (UK Essays). The concept of Social exclusion covering wide range of social and economic problems, first developed in Europe and later on in other parts of the world.

In 1907, Ovide Decroly, a Belgian pioneer of a new/holistic education also called ' the father of special education' , founded a school for children of mild disabilities (behavioural disorders, learning disabilities, light mental retardation) and gradually developed his pedagogy, where education was based on principles of human biosocial

needs underlying the intrinsic need of the human organism. His first-hand observations of children was in a milieu which suited them, an environment which was conducive to the full development of their personalities, their capacities and their human potential. He introduced an educational methodology to educate children 'for life and through life', the guiding principles were always fresh and effective for both, teaching and learning, as these were based on the need of a social organism to adapt to changing social conditions and not on previous political/social doctrine. The method was based on an understanding of and respect for the human personality or 'human nature' as a function of the psychological motives for human learning behaviour or 'human needs'. He asserted basic purpose of education learning how to live successfully. "To educate in its fullest sense is to create conditions in which the child can live-and is led by these conditions, led to live-as fully as possible through each succeeding stage of his development, meeting and solving in his own experience the problems of each stage as it comes, and so gaining the power to meet and to solve the problems that await him in further stages. Such conditions it is for a school to provide" .

Later on, the movements in this pretext elaborated ineffectiveness of segregate special education services, which led to change education of students with Special Education Need (SEN) from segregation to integration.( Salend an Duhaney, 2011). Later, the difference between the concepts of integration and inclusion were explained; integration refers to make pupil ready for mainstream placement and additional settings within a school that usually do not change (Ainscow, 1995), while inclusion means to reconstruct school system for responding to diversity of students (UKEssay). Diversity refers to all of the ways in which people are distinct ad unique i.e. the variations and differences found among people.

UK government had allowed from 1960s some children with disability /special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream schools. ). Inclusion in schooling system, in its current formulation began in the 1960s when policies of segregation were questioned and intensively debated within the context of the civil rights movement. This gave rise the birth of an integrated system which was legitimised by the Warnock Report (DES, 1978) and the subsequent 1981 Education Act (DES, 1981) in England. Highlighted failure of integrative system of education coupled with Significant Salamanca Statement (UNESCO 1994) which was accepted by 92 countries and 25 organisations for concentrating their efforts on the development of inclusive schools led to the emergence of the inclusive education we see today in UK & elsewhere globally. Although, some of Countries established their own inclusive policies in the light of Salamanca statement (Fletcher and Artiles,2005, Mitchell, 2005). In 1997, a New Labour government committed to equity and education of children with SEN and disabilities. Inclusion from this time had become a political process (Allan, 2008), a key component of governmental planning (Corbett, 2001) and implementation approach (Coles & Hancock, 2002), but dissent notes went on. (Hodkinson, 2007).

Centre for Disability and Cultural Studies (2011) concluded that " inclusion became located as a ' guise of truth' which employed a cultural cloak of equality to create double binds where performativity was pitched against presence, standards against segregation and ableism against absence" . The whole system of society where social justice and equality are mediated, dominated and subordinated by ideological diktat, competition and simple coldblooded economics. Subsequently, justice, human and moral considerations overwhelmed the human intellectuals over consistent cries of the sufferers/ excluders, which led to reframe the inclusion ' problem' undermining and subverting the ideology of " expertism" that plagues inclusion practice. The ultimate result is in terms of ' all will be included' , ' we are a fully inclusive society' and ' all can fully participate' .

France Government considers constitution of " excluded" as: mentally and physically handicapped, suicidal people, aged invalids, abused children, substance abusers, delinquents, single parents, multi-problem households, marginal, asocial persons, and other social ' misfits' .

WHO estimates 9.5 percent of all humanity suffers from disability and 10 percent of the work force is lost due to disability that can have disastrous consequences. China with largest population in the world has 1 billion (15%) disabled people, while in USA, 61 million ( 26 %) adults have some kind of disability.

United Nations declared 1981 as ' the year of the disabled' , later extended to decade of the 80' s as ' the decade of the disabled. ' After that UNO declared 1983-92 as International Decade of the Disabled. Later on 1993-2002 was declared ESCAP decade of the disabled which is extended up to 2012. All this gave significant impetus to worldwide awareness. India, enacted three very important legislations. The Rehabilitation Council of India Act (RCI), 1993 was entrusted responsibility for training, policies and programmes. The Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 and National Trust was set up under the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities, Act 1999. These were important landmark towards steps to ensure equal opportunities for people with disabilities for their full participation in national development.

**Defining Inclusion**

Inclusion is a wide multi-dimensional complex concept which has no commonly agreed definition even internationally. It covers many areas such as social policies, education, laws and employment.  It has been defined and conceptualized in a variety of ways which cause a lot of confusions (Hornby, 2001; Mitchell, 2005). A lot of researchers has limited its scope to field of inclusive education in schools; some concentrate on individuals with disabilities, special and general education; others consider 'education for all' perspective which include all students who are vulnerable to exclusion such as ethnic minorities, religious minorities, poverty-stricken children, rural populations, girls in some cultures. (Mitchell, 2005).

Inclusion has been given diverse meanings in many studies. In two recent reviews, four diverse uses of the term inclusion were discerned in high-impact research. A placement definition implies, as does its forerunner, mainstreaming, that inclusion denotes the place of education. The second use involves, in addition to placement, the requirement that the social and academic needs of pupils with disabilities or in need of special support are met. The third definition reflects the second but concerns all pupils. The fourth definition, finally, involves the creation of communities in schools. Striving for more inclusive practices it is essential to have clear definition of inclusion. The notion of inclusion generally followed is that inclusion involves all pupils, i.e. inclusion means that all pupils should be participating socially and learn according to their prerequisites. Ideally, this would also involve the creation of communities in schools and classroom and how to achieve this in practice. Inclusion education shows 3 generational movement from rights perspective to a person centred and thirdly to common standard of practice for all students: (1) empowerment, (2) capacity building as well as prevention, and (3) notions of productivity and contribution. (Shogren and Wehmeyer, 2014 )

While some perspectives like social exclusion, diversity led to evolve the concept of inclusion, some terms like full inclusion, responsible inclusion, reverse inclusion, moderate inclusion, social inclusion, educational inclusion, cultural inclusion have been used in scanty. Recently, there is a worldwide growing movement towards full inclusion in education, which aim to place all students in regular schools-an approach or a system to educating students with special educational needs in mainstream schools.

**UNESCO Conference in 1974 set the stage to define and clarify the inclusion in education:**

"The principle of equal rights for the disabled and non-disabled implies that the needs of each and every individual are of equal importance, that these needs must be made the basis for the planning of societies, and that resources must be employed in such a way as to ensure, for every individual, equal opportunities for participation." " All children and young people of the world, with their individual strengths and weaknesses, with their hopes and expectations, have the right to education. It is not our education systems that have a right to certain types of children. Therefore, it is the school system of a country that must be adjusted to meet the needs of all children.(Statement on Equity by Bengt Lindqvist, 1994).

Consistent with prior emphases, It was highlighted that, " .…the education of children with special educational needs…is vital to the creation of a fully inclusive society…We owe it to all children…to develop to their full potential and contribute economically and play a full part as active citizens" . (Hodkinson, 2011).

Inclusion welcomes all children regardless any differences. Differences of children are accepted and respected in inclusion. It is a process by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individual to cater to their needs. UNESCO (2005) views inclusion as " a dynamic approach of responding positively to pupil diversity and of seeing individual

differences not as problems, but as opportunities for enriching learning". Regardless of any barrier, education is viewed as a facilitator in everyone's human development and functionality. Students are given appropriate strategies, accommodations and teaching styles to match their unique learning styles.

All children participate in all activities of the school and all- teachers, parents and community members share philosophy of inclusion treating all children with dignity and respect. Inclusion is a dynamic process which is constantly evolving to promote an inclusive society according to local cultures and contexts and is part of the wider strategy. An inclusive classroom welcomes, nurtures, and educates all children regardless of their gender and characteristics such as physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic (Komal).

The **Principles of Inclusion** promote equity, access, opportunity and the rights of children and students with disability in education and care and contribute to reducing discrimination against them.

**UNESCO has highlighted 4 key elements of inclusion education-**
1. Schools must accommodate all children regardless of their differences
2. At the school level- teachers must be trained, buildings must be suitable and students must receive accessible learning materials.
3. At the community level, stigma and discrimination must be removed and individuals need to be educated to get the benefit of inclusive education.
4. At the national level, Governments must align laws and policies with the Convention on the Rights of persons with Disability, and regularly collect and analyse data to ensure children are reached with effective services.

Inclusion education shows generational movement from rights perspective to a person centred and thirdly to common standard of practice for all students: (1) empowerment, (2) capacity building as well as prevention, and (3) notions of productivity and contribution. (Shogren and Wehmeyer, 2014) (Gyimah et.al, 2008 in UKEssays. (2018).

**Status of Disability**

WHO estimates 9.5 percent of all humanity suffers from disability and 10 percent of the work force is lost due to disability that can have disastrous consequences.

UNICEF estimates that out of total 93 million disable children worldwide about 50 per cent are not in school. Although, they are like all children, but their need of quality education to develop their skills and realize their full potential, are overlooked at all levels limiting their access to education and their ability to participate in social, economic and political life.

Overall, 2.21% of Indian population has one or the other kind of disability. According to Census 2011, out of the total 7864636 children with disability in India constituting 1.7 percent of the total child population, 75 % at the age of 5 years and 25 % between 5-19 do not attend any educational institution in India. Prevalence rate is 2.2% (2.3 per cent

in rural areas and 2.0 per cent in the urban areas, 2.4 % among males and 1.9 per cent among females); incident rate 86 per 100000 persons; literate of age 7 years and above, 52.2 per cent; secondary level and above only 19.3 % and 3 to 35 years 10.1 per cent attends preschool intervention programme. Ever 3-35 years enrolled in ordinary school were 62.9 per cent and enrolled in special schools or not currently attending are 4.1 per cent. Only 21.8 per cent receive help from Govt. and 1.8 per cent from other than Government and 76.4 per cent do not receive any aid/help.  Only 28.8 per cent has certificate of disability.

Girls and young women with disabilities are ' doubly disabled' . (WHO, 2013). Girls with disabilities are less likely to get an education, receive vocational training or find employment than are boys with disabilities or girls without disabilities. (Groce, 2004, in Slideshare by Mohanti, 2019).

Inclusive education framed as an alternative to special education, expanded the responsibilities of schools and school systems to increase access, participation, and opportunities to learn for marginalized populations of students. Inclusive education, operating on ability and disability if fully realized (Peters 2004) can be seen as a collaborative, mutually constitutive, responsive interaction between learners and teachers (Skrtic, et al. 1996)(Ainscow, 2005).

**Developments in India regarding Special and Inclusion education in India**

In India, the first special school for blinds was opened by Jane Leupot, under Church Missionary Society in 1869, for the deaf in Bombay in 1883 and for blind in Amritsar by Christian Missionaries in 1887. There has been inadequate special schools with coverage of only 2% of the population in need (Rangasayee, 1995). After country' s independence in 1947, the government of India, constitutionally committed to ensuring the right of every child to basic education developed many policies around in this regard, the earliest being Kothari Commission (1966) with impetus to educating children with disability, the Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) scheme of 1974 (NCERT, 2011, in 1980s an Institution to monitor and regulate the HRD programmes in the field of disability rehabilitation. the National Policy on Edition-NPE, 1986; Project for the Integration of the Disabled (PIED), 1986; the principle of Composite Area Approach (CAA); the Programme of Action (POA), 1992- which made provisions for training of general teachers, preparation of learning materials, education devices, support teacher and staff and setting of resource centres; the revised IEDC scheme in 1992  with comprehensive provisions.

The Government' s Disabilities Act in 1995 provides persons with disabilities equal rights, their full participation in mainstream schools.

DISTRICT DISABILITY REHABILITATION CENTRES (DRDC), 1995 were started main objective of DRDC is awareness generation, early detection and early intervention through survey and identification of persons with disabilities through camp approach. It

also make provisions for Therapeutic Services e.g. Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy etc.

In 1997, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – was established to ensure teaching for students with special needs in the least restrictive environment of general classroom with general education curricula and assessment of practices, and classrooms where special and general education teachers together worked for the benefit of each and every student. Further strengthened in 2002, with " No Child Left Behind Act" legislation that led to shift of students with special needs from segregated classrooms to inclusion-an educational system providing appropriate strategies, accommodations and teaching styles to match unique learning styles of children including disabled children.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), (2001-2002) was launched to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education converging various schemes and programmes with the key objective of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) with suitable training and learning material. Three important aspect of UEE are access, enrolment and retention of all children in 6-14 years of age. With a zero rejection policy, ensuring every Child with Special Needs (CWSN), irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided meaningful and quality education.

National Institute for Empowerment of Persons With Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD): It was established in the year 2005 in Chennai with wide services to persons with multiple disabilities.

Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) launched a scheme Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS) in year 2009-10, replacing the IEDC and provides assistance for the inclusive education of the children with one or more disabilities as defined under the Persons with Disabilities Act (1995) in classes IX-XII. Under IEDSS (2015-16), 2.37 lakh students have been approved to be covered where number of CWSN girls are 107159 and number of CWSN boys are 130195 and 4960 new seats for special educators has been approved.

RPWD Act 2016: After India signed and ratified the UNCRPD in 2007, it replaced Persons With Disabilities Act (PWD Act, 1995) with the Rights of PWD Act, 2016 (RPWD Act, 2016 ) and made many provisions; full and effective participation and inclusion in society, respect for difference and acceptance of disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity, equality of opportunity, accessibility, equality between men and women, respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities, and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities. The principle reflects a paradigm shift in thinking about disability from a social welfare concern to a human rights issue. The Act has extended disability list from 7 to 21, to include cerebral palsy, dwarfism, muscular dystrophy, acid attack victims, hard of hearing, speech and language disability, specific learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, chronic neurological disorders such as multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease, blood disorders such as haemophilia, thalassemia, and sickle cell anaemia, and multiple disabilities.

Mental retardation is replaced by intellectual disability defined as " a condition characterized by significant limitation both in intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem-solving) and in adaptive behavior which covers a range of every day social and practical skills including specific learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorders." Elaborate definition of mental illness which is " a substantial disorder of thinking, mood, perception, orientation, or memory that grossly impairs judgment, behavior, and capacity to recognize reality or ability to meet the ordinary demands of life but does not include retardation which is a condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind of a person, especially characterized by subnormality of intelligence." Persons with at least 40% of any of the above disability on certification get 3 % reservations in job.

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020(third after NEP 1968 and revised in NEP, 1984) aims to make school education and academic content more engaging and interactive with Change in curriculum, courses and medium of instruction, and the takeaways for students.

The RTE Act (2009): provides the right to education of children from 6 to 14 years of age a fundamental right. It tries to safeguard the rights of the children belonging to the disadvantaged groups and the weaker sections, protect them from any kind of discrimination and ensure their completion of elementary education. It is made mandatory that private unaided and specified category schools have to admit at least 25% of its entry level class from children belonging to weaker and disadvantaged groups.

**Benefits of Inclusive Education**

Thomas Hehir (2017) reported that, " There is clear and consistent evidence that inclusive educational settings can confer substantial short and long-term benefits for students with and without disabilities" . " A large body of research indicates that included students with disabilities develop stronger skills in reading and mathematics, have higher rates of attendance, are less likely to have behavioural problems, and are more likely to complete secondary school than students who have not been included. As adults, students with disabilities who have been included are more likely to be enrolled in post-secondary education, and to be employed or living independently."
Often, SEN outperform their peers, gets social and emotional benefit including forming and maintaining positive peer relationships, which have important implications for a child's learning and psychological development, they generally do not harm their peers. " A literature review describes five benefits of inclusion for non-disabled students: reduced fear of human difference, accompanied by increased comfort and awareness (less fear of people who look or behave differently); growth in social cognition (increased tolerance of others, more effective communication with all peers); improvements in self-concept (increased self-esteem, perceived status, and sense of belonging); development of personal moral and ethical principles (less prejudice, higher responsiveness to the needs of others); and warm and caring friendships." An extensive recent meta-analysis covering a total sample of almost 4,800,000 students has also confirmed the finding that

inclusive learning environments have also been shown to have no detrimental impact, and some positive impact, on the academic performance of non-disabled students.

The benefits of inclusion are numerous, not only for children with special needs and their families, but for all children. They learn to accept of other children, and that each person has unique abilities. With inclusion in place, children with special needs are provided equal opportunity to participate in the same types of programs and activities as children without special needs. Some of the benefits of inclusion for children with (or without) disabilities are friendship skills, peer models, problem solving skills, positive self-image, and respect for others. This can trickle down to their families as well, teaching parents and families to be more accepting of differences. Since parents are a child's first teacher and know their child best, it is important to have good communication with families, creating consistency between home and school. Working together and creating a partnership with families is an important part of inclusion, and can help children reach their developmental potential.

Inclusive learning provides friendly environment based on human values and justification for treating all children alike - from different cultural or linguistic backgrounds, with normal /special abilities or learning needs. It is non-discriminatory, gender fair, culturally sensitive and celebrates differences, and stimulates learning for all children. It not only feeds to diversity of children's needs and abilities, but also promotes participation, cooperation, caring, self-esteem, and confidence to develop life skills, relevant behaviour for daily lives and healthy life style. It enriches learning and facilitates in everyone's human development and functionality. With the involvement of family and community, there is relevant contribution to their adjustment, change in attitude of parents and community. Inclusive education recognises and responds to diversity of the children's needs and abilities – including differences in their ways and pace of learning. Flexible teaching and learning methods adapted to different needs and learning styles, flexible curriculum responsive and adaptable to diverse needs and not overloaded with academic content, reorienting teacher education, involvement of parents and the community, early identification and remediation of children at risk of failure. Inclusive teaching provide opportunity for teachers to learn and benefit from that learning. Teachers, families, communities are also involved in children's learning which is also relevant to their daily lives.

In a digital age, it unfolds the potential for self-determined learning that is transparent and engages democratic community building. It combats disrupting dominant notions of race, language, ability, gender, and religion (Slee, 2001). However, with its evolution, it is becoming, in many contexts, suspiciously like special education, a way of sorting and separating students who are viewed as not fitting the model student profile (Slee, 2001).

**Challenges and Present status of Inclusive Education**

**Indian Scenario**

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In India, the number of the disabled people are large and is a multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-religious country, and its people are stratified along sharp socio-economic and caste lines. Their problems are complex and varied, available resources are scarce and social attitudes are damaging to inclusion education.

Jitendra (2016) analysed three factors which hinder inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom; inadequate training of teachers, infrastructure and administration or administrative support. In context of these three factors, Eighth All India School Education Survey (2009) portraits picture of adopting Inclusion in Indian schools as- out of a total 12, 99, 902 schools in the country only 2, 74, 445 (21.11%) schools adhere to inclusive education for disabled children, 80,942 (1.32%) out of the 58,76, 273 total teachers  have received training of at least two weeks, 42.69% of schools either do not have special educator/resource teachers or such teachers never visited the schools. Out of the total schools in the country, only 10.47% have Handrails, 3.81% have adapted laboratory and 7.64% have adapted lavatory [13]. Status of facilities regarding training of teachers, infrastructure and administrative support provided to CWSN in schools is clearly deficient.

Despite Governments'  initiatives to improve the enrolment, retention and achievement of children with disabilities in Indian schools, yet the field of inclusive education is focused on a narrow and limited perspective (Singal, 2005). It lacks some of important features such as feeling of being accepted and valued, teachers in rural areas, flexibility in school environment, and teacher training suiting to inclusive education (Bindal and Sharma) skilled and trained personnel for supporting inclusive practices is inadequate to meet the needs of different types of disability. Indian schools are not fully prepared to accommodate all disables and fulfil their needs in the process of education. Most services for children with disabilities are concentrated in big cities (UNICEF (2003) and data on the magnitude and educational status of children with disabilities are consistently absent.

Indian school system is rigid; schools are deficient in learning material, facility, curriculum and above all will to help laggards. The values of the education system are contradictory and non-conducive for development of disabled children. Total school system & environment are not sensitive to address problems and needs of the disables, evaluation system only assesses rote memory and not the innovative or different ideas. Main barriers to inclusion education are - insufficient knowledge of teachers regarding inclusion education, doubt about its benefits to all students, belief that children with disabilities are limited in capacity, growth and progress, the belief that they have no time for teaching these children who progress very slowly or do not progress and teachers believe that they have no training and resources for implementation.

So, a proper environment in school system as a whole is needed in India to strengthen inclusive education; attitude of teacher and community people need to change. Moreover,

Planning must be done on basis of recognizing individuality with appreciation and respect and on data collected time to time on ground reality. Continuous appropriate efforts should be taken with dissemination of scientific information to remove difficulties and refine the service. Tanu Shrma PU

**International Scenario**

Research has also surfaced the complexities, challenges, and innovative practices that must be considered in order to install inclusive education as a normative practice. Some problems with inclusive education were identified as: the lack of knowledge about how to create inclusive classrooms involving all pupils, lack of knowledge regarding whether school systems actually are becoming more inclusive, and there are still diverse opinions among parents and teachers about the suitability of inclusive education. Given the different education systems, a certain configuration of events and actions a, b, c and so on seem to be beneficial in developing more inclusive practices. Consequently, there seems to be more need to explore and analyse in this context. (Claes Nilholm).

**Steps to Improve Inclusive Education**
To achieve education for all, Schools with inclusive culture are most effective way to combat discriminatory attitudes and creating welcoming communities. Inclusive schools must recognise and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities. (UNESCO, 1994, framework for Action on Special Needs Education, p.11-12).

In view of the literature, inclusive education needs to be relooked at and reframed in India and hurdles limiting inclusive education needs to be removed.
Proper infrastructure, support system and positive attitude of teachers with appropriate training is highly required for proper nurturing of disables in India. The present rigid system of assessment based on rote memory is not sensitive to abilities of differently abled. So, a proper environment in schools is needed in India to strengthen inclusive education. At societal level too, it is necessary to change attitude.
Moreover, planning is done without looking at researches done in this area. With a proper planning in India, inclusive education must respond to all pupils as individuals, recognizing individuality as something to be appreciated and respected.
Inclusive values, acceptance and cultural differences need be included in education curricula, not only within special education. This will ensure support as well as nurture differences. The success is then looked as diversity and not standardization.
Research about inclusion needs analyses at several levels. Theories as of now have limited scope; despite providing important knowledge, they are decontextualised from actual practice and framed within a more traditional special needs perspective. They fail to yield relevant evidence as to how more inclusive environments can be established. So, we need better theories that can cover/ create more inclusive practices apart from

previous too restrictive or too remote to practice theorising. For more elaborate theories, case histories based on rich data, both qualitative and quantitative, longitudinal, interventional and studies on environments that are moving in an inclusive direction need be focus for future implication. Further, there is need to systematic use the case-studies at system level that are well-suited for different levels of analysis and take complexity into account and preserve the integrity of phenomena in the light of theoretical understandings of the past and present. These may not arrive at universally valid theories of how to develop inclusive practices but rather on conclusion of the following type: Given the education system X, a certain configuration of events and actions a, b, c and so on seem to be beneficial in developing more inclusive practices (Claes Nilholm, 2020).

To support inclusive education, educators need to have both the capacity to provide learning opportunities to all students in their classrooms as well as the vision that all students, regardless of race, language, religion, gender, and ability should be given the opportunity to receive an excellent education. Educators need institutional contexts that are designed to accommodate inclusive practices, and school leaders who understand the complexities of the work and can provide the feedback, support, and leadership necessary for sustaining inclusive practices across generations of students and their teachers (Maria, 2014).

Ainscow (2005) suggests that inclusive education requires organizing schools as communities of practice in which sets of tools structure participation and privilege particular kinds of practices. Rather, inclusive education comprises an agenda that transcends categorization of teachers and students (Ferguson 2008).

**Status of Inclusion Education in India**
Retention and achievement of children with disabilities in Indian schools still persist. The education system is also marked by deficiency of important features of inclusion such as feeling of being accepted and valued, more teachers in rural areas, flexible in school environment, and teacher training according to inclusive education. Bindal and Sharma (2010).The field of inclusive education is focused on a narrow and limiting perspective. Singal (2005). Most of the services for children with disabilities are concentrated in big cities (UNICEF, 2003). Consistent absence of data on the magnitude and educational status of children with disabilities. Skilled and trained personnel for supporting inclusive practices are not adequate to meet the needs of different types of disability. With universal pace, India needs to remove obstacles on the way of inclusion. Proper infrastructure, support system is required for proper nurturing of disables in India. Teacher' s attitude towards disables can be positively changed with the proper training regarding disable education. Indian schools are not fully prepared to accommodate all disables and fulfil their needs in the process of education. Evaluation system only assesses rote memory in a rigid way without considering problems faced by disables. So, a proper environment in schools is needed in India to strengthen inclusive education. At societal level too, it is necessary to change attitude.

Moreover, Planning is done without looking at researches done in this area; without looking at census which tells where majority of disables live. With a proper planning in India, inclusive education must respond to all pupils as individuals, recognizing individuality as something to be appreciated and respected.

**CONCLUSION:** The complex concept of inclusion has been evolved over a time with various perspectives. Inclusion means participation of all persons in society in general, including education in such a way that is essential for development of peoples' potential, welfare and progress. Inclusive education benefit all children including those with special needs-all children and young people with their individual strengths and weaknesses, with their hopes and expectations, have opportunity and environment to flourish in their own way without discrimination with marginalized or disables. Inclusion is a principled concept with values in and provide equity and justice to everyone. Currently, particularly in India, there are short comings in the education system, teacher attitude and culture that limit inclusive education. Therefore, we must modify education system, educate our teachers and students to work collaboratively to celebrate diversity. More awareness programmes about the existing policy and programmes need be organized to enhance peoples' knowledge to remove their dogmas as well. The contribution of diverse stakeholders in the development of a school's culture and environment must grow. The society need to use undeveloped immense potentials of children with special needs. Further, programmes and planning need be based on research findings such that inclusive education responds to all pupils as individuals, recognizing individuality with appreciation and respect.

### Limitations

1. In view of vast varied literature, despite precautions, one or the other important aspect of inclusion may have been skipped.

2. There may appear repetition of literature, but effort has been done to maintain all projected sensitivities.

### Recommendations

Since inclusive education is basic to provide justice to all kinds of children and bring disadvantaged to main stream of development, effective programmes should be framed to address its important issues - school system, curriculum, proper teacher training, teacher/ parents / community people attitude and above developing a culture to respect individuality with respect. Policy members also need to encourage research as well as publically come all out to recognize the importance of inclusion education and acknowledge the role of teachers in this context.

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