



ISSN 2278 – 0211 (Online)

Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs: A Study of Sarva Sikhsha Abhiyan in Cuttack

Suchismita Mohanty

Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Sociology, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha, India

Abstract:

Inclusive Education denotes that all children irrespective of their strengths and weaknesses will be part of the mainstream education. The feeling of belongingness among all community members – teachers, students and other functionaries is developed through inclusive education. Inclusive education strives to address the learning needs of children with special needs, with a particular focus on those who are subject to being isolated and excluded. Lack of flexibility in curriculum, inability to fend for themselves and thus being bullied by others in the class and not getting adequate attention from the teacher are common issues. In India, a majority of children with special needs do not receive any formal education, in spite of the practice of inclusive education in some schools. This is because children with disabilities and learning deficiencies are segregated from mainstream schools and other regular routines and social activities of normal children. Other contributing factors to this situation are lack of affordability and awareness on the kind of education choices available to children with special needs. Hence, inclusive education becomes a key reason for integrating a special child with the mainstream. Another critical aspect of inclusive education for a special needs child is in having the acceptance and friendship of classmates. This kind of support also aids in the progress of special children and helps them gain confidence within the school environment. Further, parents have a vital role as partners to make inclusive education successful within the classroom. This is possible when the children with special needs continue to live at home and attend school, just like normal children. Parents should also be involved with the teachers and administrative staff at the school to coordinate travel arrangements, school activities and learning materials for their special child.

1. Introduction

“For life to go on—change is inevitable. Change is never easy especially when it involves a large number of individuals and an established system. Yet change is necessary when innovative practices demonstrate greater effectiveness than past services”.

Education is a powerful instrument of social change, and often initiates upward movement in the social structure. Thereby, helping to bridge the gap between the different sections of society. The educational scene in the country has undergone major change over the years, resulting in better provision of education and better educational practices.

Inclusive education strives to address the learning needs of children with special needs, with a particular focus on those who are subject to being isolated and excluded. The philosophy behind inclusive education is to promote opportunities for all children to participate, learn and have equal treatment, irrespective of their mental or physical abilities. While the awareness on inclusive education in schools throughout the country is still at an infancy stage, educational institutions are somewhat sceptical about having both normal and special children studying in the same classroom. And in circumstances, where a former excluded child is given admission into a mainstream classroom, the outcome of the action is questionable.

Lack of flexibility in curriculum, inability to fend for themselves and thus being bullied by others in the class and not getting adequate attention from the teacher are common issues. All these may result in the child not getting a fair inclusive education. As a result, the number of children with special needs receiving higher education is on the decline.

Inclusive Education denotes that all children irrespective of their strengths and weaknesses will be part of the mainstream education. The feeling of belongingness among all community members – teachers, students and other functionaries is developed through inclusive education. Inclusive education is for all, irrespective of any social community, caste, class gender and (dis-) ability of the child.

In India, a majority of children with special needs do not receive any formal education, in spite of the practice of inclusive education in some schools. This is because children with disabilities and learning deficiencies are segregated from mainstream schools and other regular routines and social activities of normal children. Other contributing factors to this situation are lack of affordability and awareness on the kind of education choices available to children with special needs.

Hence, inclusive education becomes a key reason for integrating a special child with the mainstream. According to Dr. Mithu Alur, founder of the Spastics Society of India and coordinator at the National Resource Centre for Inclusion (NRCI), "Children need to be with other children. Sending them to a school for disabled will not help." Inclusive schools have to be well-equipped in all aspects to cater and deliver quality education for all children. This includes having a balanced curriculum that is appropriate for all categories of children, teachers who have the ability to handle the individual needs within the classroom and thereby promote an environment where personal development, social skills and student participation are strongly encouraged.

Another critical aspect of inclusive education for a special needs child is in having the acceptance and friendship of classmates. This kind of support also aids in the progress of special children and helps them gain confidence within the school environment. Further, parents have a vital role as partners to make inclusive education successful within the classroom. This is possible when the children with special needs continue to live at home and attend school, just like normal children. Parents should also be involved with the teachers and administrative staff at the school to coordinate travel arrangements, school activities and learning materials for their special child.

The Heritage School located in Kolkata is well-known for its inclusive education philosophy where in children special needs are combined with the mainstream children to encourage overall improved student learning. The school has created a need-based programme with its educators to focus on its special students to allow them to discover their own skills and work on them to catch up with their peers. Meenakshi Atal, the Vice Principal of the school says, "Participation is key to academic inclusion and we ensure that the participation of the children with special needs in all mainstream activities happens to the best of their abilities."

The Indian government continues to include children special needs under several of their education initiatives, including the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). This is a government programme that aims at improving and providing quality primary education for all children. There are several national and local NGOs that champion the cause of children with disabilities and provide specific resource centres in support of inclusive education. For instance, the Spastics Society of India has a division that aims at promoting the right of children with cerebral palsy to inclusive education. There are also private schools in the country such as The Heritage School, Akshar School, Vydehi School of Excellence, Chettinad Srihari Vikasam etc. that offer individualized learning programmes for children with special needs.

In conclusion, children with special needs have a distinctive experience undergoing inclusive education along with normal, non-disabled classmates. There are several barriers for providing education to special children in a regular classroom.

We can overcome these obstacles by creating more awareness on inclusive education, by schools having the resources and the ability to re-structure their curriculum to cater to all types of students, by recruiting teachers who have the skills and proficiency to meet varying demands within the classroom and by having the support of family. If these changes are implemented, it will increase the confidence of a number of special children to aspire for a valuable education like their normal peers.

In 1944, the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) published a comprehensive report called the Sergeant Report on the post-war educational development of the country. As per the report, provisions for the education of the handicapped, were to form an essential part of the national system of education, which was to be administered by the Education Department. According to this report, handicapped children were to be sent to special schools only when the nature and extent of their defects made this necessary. The Kothari Commission (1964-66), the first education commission of independent India, observed: "the education of the handicapped children should be an inseparable part of the education system." The commission recommended experimentation with integrated programmes in order to bring as many children as possible into these programmes (Alur, 2002).

2. Various Laws on Disability

2.1. Laws on Education of the Disabled

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 advocates integrated education in general school for locomotor impaired children and the mildly disabled children and special education to the severely handicapped children. It also recommends orientation and pre-service training for general teachers on disability management and provision of vocational training. The Policy document says that the objective should be to integrate the physically and the mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners to prepare them to face life with courage and confidence. The Indian Government has laws and schemes to promote the education of disabled children at various levels. Central and State governments and local authorities are legally bound to provide access to free education to all the disabled children till the age of 18 years and also promote integration of disabled children in normal schools under the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, better known as PD Act. The Government, as per the Act,

should formulate schemes to conduct part-time classes, impart non-formal education, and provide education through open schools and open universities for children with special needs. The Act also envisages a comprehensive education scheme to provide transport facilities, remove architectural barriers, supply free books, uniform and other materials, grant scholarship, restructure curriculum and modify the examination system for the benefit of children with special needs. However, exclusionary policies and practices that deny admission to disabled children are widely prevalent all over the country. All children have the right to be educated regardless of their disability or learning difficulty, because education is a human right. Many premier schools in the country deny admission to disabled children in violation of their right to education.

2.2. National Policy on Education (NPE) – 1986

The NPE brought the fundamental issue of equality centre stage. Section 4.9 of the policy clearly focuses on the needs of the children with disabilities. “The objective should be to integrate the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence. The following measures will be taken in this regard: Wherever it is feasible, the education of children with motor handicaps and other mild handicaps will be common with that of others. □ Special schools with hostels will be provided as far as possible at district headquarters for the severely handicapped children. □ □ Adequate arrangements will be made to give vocational training to the disabled. Teachers’ training programmes will be reoriented in particular for teachers of primary classes to deal with the special difficulties of the handicapped children and □ □ Voluntary effort for the education of the disabled will be encouraged in every possible manner.

2.3. Plan of Action (POA) – 1992

The NPE was followed by POA (1992). The POA suggested a pragmatic placement principle for children with special needs. It postulated that a child with disability who can be educated in a general school should be educated in a general school only and not in a special school. Even those children who are initially admitted to special schools for training in plus curriculum skills should be transferred to general schools once they acquire daily living skills, communication skills and basic academic skills.

2.4. Rehabilitation Council of India Act (RCI -1992)

The POA was strengthened by the enactment of the RCI Act, 1992. Experience showed that there was no mechanism in the country to standardize and monitor the training of special educators and other rehabilitation professionals in the country. Therefore, in 1992, Parliament of India enacted the RCI Act, subsequently amended in 2000, to establish a statutory mechanism for monitoring and standardizing courses for the training of 16 categories of professionals required in the field of special education and rehabilitation of persons with disability. Training of special educators and resource teachers that can offer support services to children with special needs in regular schools is the responsibility of RCI.

2.5. Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act, 1995

The most landmark legislation in the history of special education in India is the Persons with Disabilities (Equal opportunities, protection of rights & full participation) Act, 1995. This comprehensive Act covers seven disabilities namely blindness, low vision, hearing impaired, locomotors impaired, mental retardation, leprosy cured and mental illness. Chapter V (Section 26) of the Act, which deals with education, mentions that the appropriate Governments and the local authorities shall:

- Ensure that every child with a disability has access to free education in an appropriate environment till he attains the age of eighteen years;
- Endeavour to promote the integration of students with disabilities in the normal schools.
- Promote setting up of special schools in governments and private sector for those in need of special education, in such a manner that children with disabilities living in any part of the country have success to such schools;
- Endeavour to equip the special schools for children with disabilities with vocational training facilities.

2.6. National Trust Act -1999

Another landmark legislation is the National Trust Act. In 1999, the Indian Parliament passed an Act entitled “National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disability. This Act seeks to protect and promote the rights of persons who, within the disability sector, have been even more marginalized than others. Though the National Trust Act of 1999 does not directly deal with the education of children with special needs, one of its thrust areas is to promote programmes, which foster inclusion and independence by creating barrier free environment, developing functional skills of the disabled and promoting self-help groups. These three landmark legislations have highlighted the enormous thrust that this area has received from the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

The Education Act, 1998, provided a statutory basis for policy and practice in relation to all education provision. While the Act is broad, governing all aspects of education, one of its aims is to “give practical effect to the constitutional rights of children, including children who have a disability or who have other special educational needs, as they relate to education” (part 1 section 6). It provides the first legal definition of SEN in Ireland, which it describes as “the educational needs of students who have a disability and the educational needs of exceptionally able students” (part 1 section 2). Drawing on the traditional medical definition of disability, the Act locates the source of educational difficulties within the child while ignoring “environmental and contextual issues” (Griffin et al., 2007: 58). On the other hand, it expressly aims to improve the learning environment for children experiencing learning difficulties by promoting “best practice in teaching methods with regard to the diverse needs of students and the development of the skills and competencies of teachers”. It acknowledges the rights of parents to send their children to a school “of the parents’ choice having regard to the rights of patrons and the effective and efficient use of resources” (part 1 section 6). The Education Act, 1998, was followed in quick succession by a range of legislative enactments; the National Disabilities Authority Act, 1999; the Education Welfare Act, 2000; The Equal Status Act, 2000; the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN), 2004; and the Disability Act, 2005. Significantly, the DES published a White Paper specifically focused on Early Childhood Education in 1999.

2.7. *The Education Welfare Act, 2000*

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, does not make specific reference to special education but the provisions of the Act apply to all students, including those with special educational needs. A stated aim of the Act is to “ensure that each child attends a recognized school or otherwise receives a certain minimum education” (part 1 section 7). Under this Act, the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) was established. Children with SEN are included within the remit of the Board which must promote and foster “an environment that encourages children to attend school and participate fully in the life of the school” (part 2 section 10).

2.8. *The Equal Status Acts, 2000 to 2004*

The Equal Status Act, 2000, was amended by the Equality Act, 2004. Together they are known as the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004. These Acts prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and education on nine grounds, including disability. Disability is broadly defined and covers a wide range of impairments and illnesses. In this respect, the Acts cover physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities which are described as “conditions” or “malfunctions” that result in “a person learning differently from a person without the condition or malfunction”. Under this legislation section 11: subsection 7 (1), an “educational establishment” means a preschool service within the meaning of Part VII of the Childcare Act, 1991, a primary or post-primary school or a third level college. Educational establishments including pre-schools therefore, are required to provide “reasonable accommodation” including special treatment, facilities or adjustments to permit a child with a disability to access the school. While the Acts legislate specifically for provision of reasonable accommodation to enable those with SEN to access a school/pre-school, one could argue that such accommodations should also extend to the curriculum of the setting.

2.9. *The EPSEN Act, 2004*

Acknowledged as the most significant piece of legislation in the history of the State in relation to the education of children with SEN (Carey, 2005; Griffin et al., 2007), the EPSEN Act, 2004, provides the statutory framework for the education of children with SEN. It defines the entire scope of special education provision and sets out a new approach to assessing the needs of children with SEN for educational services. In a marked departure from the definition of disability proposed in the Education Act, 1998, the EPSEN Act defines Special Educational Needs as a “restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability, or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition...” (part 1: section 1). It therefore recognizes that learning difficulties are “relative rather than all-embracing” (Griffin et al., 2007: 59).

2.10. *The Disability Act, 2005*

This Act defines disability as a “substantial restriction in the capacity of the person to carry on a profession, business or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment” (part 1 section 2). Thus, the purpose of the Act is to enable provision to be made for the assessment of health and education needs of persons with disabilities; to enable Government Ministers to make provision for services to meet those needs; to provide for the preparation of plans by Ministers for the provision of services; to provide for appeals in the event of services not being provided and to promote equality and social inclusion.

3. Statement of Problem

The key objective of SSA is Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE). Three important aspects of UEE are access, enrolment and retention of all children in 6-14 years of age. This goal of UEE, has further been facilitated by the Constitutional (86th Amendment) Act, making free and compulsory elementary education a Fundamental Right, for all the children in the age group of 6-14 years. This Amendment has given a new thrust to the education of Children With Special Needs (CWSN), as without their inclusion, the objective of UEE cannot be achieved. In fact, inclusion of one of the groups, which is extremely crucial for UEE, is perhaps that of the CWSN. Hence, education of CWSN is an important component of SSA. The RTE, Act, 2009, in section 3(1) entitle all children in the 6-14 years' age group has right to free and compulsory elementary education in a neighbourhood school.

Inclusive education stipulates that children with special needs attend the same schools as their siblings, neighbours and children in the general population with the supports necessary for optimizing their potentials for achievement and excellence through individualized learning objectives and educational plans. The school is supposed to provide the least restrictive environment to such children allowing them full participation in and sharing of school facilities. In the inclusive system, all children are placed in age-appropriate classrooms, where learning becomes an interactive process relying on instructional processes to suit to individual's learning needs and styles. The inclusive system would foster a culture of acceptance with the support of the family, community and the society. Inclusive education is more a matter of an attitude or belief system than just being founded on a set of school-related actions.

Major initiatives towards including disabled children in ordinary schools are being taken internationally in both policy and practice. Article 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) states that the disabled children have the right to enjoy a full and decent life condition, which ensures dignity, promote self-reliance, and facilitate child's active participation in the community. They are entitled to special care, education, health care, training, rehabilitation, employment preparation, and recreation opportunities. All these shall be designed in a manner conducive to the child achieving “the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development”. The UNESCO Salamanca Statement (1994) came subsequently

to stress that children with special educational needs 'must have access to regular schools'. The objectives of UEE in India cannot be achieved without the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the general system of elementary education.

3.1. Types of Disabilities

There are different types of children with special needs and different factors are responsible to make a person disabled. The disabilities of CWSN can be classified as follows: 1- Physical, 2- Cognitive, 3- Behaviour

CWSN		
Physical	Cognitive	Behaviour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partially hearing • Hearing impaired • Speech disorder • Partially sighted • Visually impaired • Locomotor Disorder • Special Health Disorder • Multiple Handicap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Retardation • Learning Disabled • Gifted Children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personality Disorder • Conduct Disorder • Childhood Psychoses

Table 1

However, taking the type of disability into consideration, the CWSN are of following types.

1. Hearing Handicapped
2. Visually Handicapped
3. Mental Retarded
4. Locomotors Handicapped
5. Learning Disabled

3.2. Interventions for CWSNs

SSA will ensure that every child with special needs, irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided education in an appropriate environment. SSA will adopt 'zero rejection' policy so that no child is left out of the education system. Approaches and Options: The thrust of SSA will be on providing integrated and inclusive education to all children with special needs in general schools. It will also support a wide range of approaches, options and strategies for education of children with special needs. This includes education through open learning system and open schools, non formal and alternative schooling, distance education and learning, special schools, wherever necessary, home based education, itinerant teacher model, remedial teaching, part time classes, community based rehabilitations (CBR) and vocational education and cooperative programmes. Components: The following activities could form components of the programme:

- **Early detection and identification:** A concerted drive to detect children with special needs at an early age should be undertaken through PHCs, ICDS, ECCE centres and other school readiness programmes. Identification of children with special needs should become an integral part of the micro-planning and household surveys. Functional and formal assessment of each identified child should be carried out. A team should be constituted at every block to carry out this assessment and recommend most appropriate placement for every child with special needs.
- **Educational Placement:** As far as possible, every child with special needs should be placed in regular schools, with needed support services.
- **Aids and appliances:** All children requiring assistive devices should be provided with aids and appliances, obtained as far as possible through convergence with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, State Welfare Departments, National Institutions or NGOs.
- **Support services:** Support services like physical access, resource rooms at cluster level, special equipment, reading material, special educational techniques, remedial teaching, curricular adaptation or adapted teaching strategies could be provided.
- **Teacher training:** Intensive teacher training should be undertaken to sensitize regular teachers on effective classroom management of children with special needs. This training should be recurrent at block/cluster levels and integrated with the on-going in-service teacher training schedules in SSA. All training modules at SCERT, DIET and BRC level should include a suitable component on education of children with special needs.
- **Resource support:** Resource support could be given by teachers working in special schools. Where necessary, specially trained resource teachers should be appointed, particularly for teaching special skills to children with special needs. Wherever this option is not feasible, long term training of regular teachers should be undertaken.
- **Individualized Educational Plan (IEP):** An IEP should be prepared by the teacher for every child with special needs in consultation with parents and experts. Its implementation should be monitored from time to time. The programme should test the effectiveness of various strategies and models by measuring the learning achievement of children with special needs periodically, after developing indicators.

- Parental training and community mobilization: Parents of children with disabilities should receive counselling and training on how to bring them up and teach them basic survival skills. Strong advocacy and awareness programmes should form a part of strategy to educate every child with special needs. A component on disability should be included in all the modules for parents, SMC and community.
- Planning and management: Resource groups should be constituted at state, district levels to undertake effective planning and management of the programmes in collaboration with PRIs and NGOs. An apex level resource group at the national level to provide guidance, technical and academic support to children with special needs under SSA may be constituted.
- Strengthening of special schools: Wherever necessary, special schools may be strengthened to obtain their resource support, in convergence with departments and agencies working in that area.
- Removal of Architectural barriers: Architectural barriers in schools will be removed for easy access. Efforts will be taken to provide disable-friendly facilities in schools and educational institutions. Development of innovative designs for schools to provide an enabling environment for children with special needs should also be a part of the programme.
- Research: SSA will encourage research in all areas of education of children with special needs including research for designing and developing new assistive devices, teaching aids, special teaching material and other items necessary to give a child with disability equal opportunities in education.
- Monitoring and evaluation: On-going monitoring and evaluation should be carried out to refine the programme from time to time. For this, appropriate monitoring mechanisms should be devised at every level and field tested at regular intervals.
- Girls with disabilities: Special emphasis must be given to education of girls with disabilities.

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Total CWSN Identified	% CWSN Identified	CWSN Enrolled in Schools	% Enrolled in schools	CWSN Enrolled in EGS/AIE Centers	CWSN provided Home Based Edu.	Total Coverage of CWSN	% CWSN covered against identified CWSN
1	Andhra Pradesh	181999	1.55	158736	87.22	2546	13305	174587	95.93
2	Ar. Pradesh	12189	3.68	9765	80.11	0	0	9765	80.11
3	Assam	97801	2.16	68374	69.91	6570	22857	92537	94.62
4	Bihar	313500	1.61	255029	81.35	5560	4592	265181	84.59
5	Chhattisgarh	46153	1.00	44198	95.76	370	507	45075	97.66
6	Goa	2140	1.42	1393	65.09	0	4	1397	65.28
7	Gujarat	107484	1.43	89066	82.86	1250	422	90738	84.42
8	Haryana	24019	0.51	21898	91.17	0	0	21898	91.17
9	H. Pradesh	22040	2.45	19643	89.12	10	2387	22040	100.00
10	J&K	25906	1.23	20117	77.65	0	0	20117	77.65
11	Jharkhand	47312	0.68	40193	84.95	314	213	40720	86.07
12	Karnataka	135301	1.77	121153	89.54	0	14148	135301	100.00
13	Kerala	157147	3.32	123296	78.46	2544	1334	127174	80.93
14	M. Pradesh	127515	0.79	102567	80.44	1405	2126	106098	83.20
15	Maharashtra	414277	2.68	380723	91.90	2981	11412	395116	95.37
16	Manipur	7423	1.31	4357	58.70	0	200	4557	61.39
17	Meghalaya	9224	1.42	7496	81.27	659	249	8404	91.11
18	Mizoram	6390	2.58	6303	98.64	0	87	6390	100.00
19	Nagaland	3672	0.91	2904	79.08	403	365	3716	100.00
20	Orissa	124741	1.82	116801	93.63	0	2777	119578	95.86
21	Punjab	114300	2.68	90266	78.97	868	5143	96277	84.23
22	Rajasthan	249323	2.29	236213	94.74	2643	3824	242680	97.34
23	Sikkim	1045	0.93	770	73.68	0	0	770	73.68
24	Tamilnadu	118151	1.21	90543	76.63	4765	22843	118151	100.00
25	Tripura	3832	0.57	3417	89.17	0	77	3494	91.18
26	Uttar Pradesh	431674	1.09	369443	85.58	5994	0	375437	86.97
27	Uttarakhand	16517	0.93	13772	83.38	73	1552	15397	93.22
28	West Bengal	224434	1.37	183063	81.57	12521	27450	223034	99.38
29	A & N Islands	815	1.46	466	57.18	0	0	466	57.18
30	Chandigarh	3886	3.06	3714	95.57	89	13	3816	98.20
31	D & N Haveli	298	0.67	206	69.13	0	0	206	69.13
32	Daman & Diu	141	0.60	70	49.65	0	71	141	100.00
33	Delhi	8015	0.28	6504	81.15	0	0	6504	81.15
34	Lakshadweep	463	3.99	398	85.96	0	65	463	100.00
35	Pondicherry	2926	1.74	2816	96.24	0	110	2926	100.00
	TOTAL	3042053	1.50	2595673	85.33	51565	138133	2780151	91.39

Table 2

SI. No.	Name of the State	Aids & Appliances Required	Aids & Appliances Provided	Percent of Total Budget
1	Andhra Pradesh	273365	223445	81.74
2	Arunachal Pradesh	15965	5665	35.48
3	Assam	48775	37016	75.89
4	Bihar	144356	94296	65.32
5	Chhattisgarh	62892	34330	54.59
6	Goa	659	43	6.53
7	Gujarat	195839	160842	82.13
8	Haryana	49437	40543	82.01
9	Himachal Pradesh	21653	12766	58.96
10	J&K	10933	4682	42.82
11	Jharkhand	72373	40867	56.47
12	Karnataka	98161	63928	65.13
13	Kerala	39610	14807	37.38
14	Madhya Pradesh	156202	90450	57.91
15	Maharashtra	251553	240553	95.63
16	Manipur	1739	1277	73.43
17	Meghalaya	11029	3457	31.34
18	Mizoram	2305	2290	99.35
19	Nagaland	2385	989	41.47
20	Orissa	233831	147429	63.05
21	Punjab	135470	89750	66.25
22	Rajasthan	126363	93194	73.75
23	Sikkim	105	57	54.29
24	Tamilnadu	141713	96677	68.22
25	Tripura	4484	1596	35.59
26	Uttar Pradesh	295252	233354	79.04
27	Uttarakhand	39294	10817	27.53
28	West Bengal	87848	82333	93.72
29	A & N Islands	825	825	100.00
30	Chandigarh	1374	1050	76.42
31	D & N Haveli	62	62	100.00
32	Daman & Diu	52	11	21.15
33	Delhi	6388	6371	99.73
34	Lakshadweep	125	0	0.00
35	Pondicherry	2604	1900	72.96
	TOTAL	2535021	1837672	72.49

Table 3: Progress on Aids & Appliances in SSA

3.3. Sociological Relevance

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan will ensure that every child with special needs, irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided education in an appropriate environment. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan will adopt 'zero rejection' policy so that no child is left out of the education system. Approaches and Options: The thrust of SSA will be on providing integrated and inclusive education to all children with special needs in general schools. It will also support a wide range of approaches, options and strategies for education of children with special needs. This includes education through open learning system and open schools, non formal and alternative schooling, distance education and learning, special schools, wherever necessary, home based education, itinerant teacher model, remedial teaching, part time classes, community based rehabilitations (CBR) and vocational education and cooperative programmes.

In Odisha, the focus is that children with special needs learn in the same schools as their non-disabled peers with the support necessary for them to be successful. The SSA parameters for implementation of the intervention for education of CWSN include provisions like monetary and physical support, planning strategies and the resource support etc. Since 2001 OPEPA has been conducting door-to-door surveys with the help of Anganwadi workers for the identification of children with special needs, followed by parental counselling.

After having provided facilities and opportunities for the inclusion of CWSN in regular classrooms under the provisions of SSA, it is now important to examine the field level reality in respect of enrollment and attendance of CWSN in schools, use and maintenance of aids, supervision and monitoring mechanism, teachers' competency in classroom transactions, and the learning achievement of CWSN. An impact assessment study is in order to examine the usefulness of the SSA interventions for the beneficiaries.

The present study will be undertaken to address important issues pertaining to the education of CWSN by examining the following:

- i. enrollment status and attendance rate of CWSN;

- ii. supply, use and maintenance of aids and appliances;
- iii. learning achievement of CWSN; and; and
- iv. teacher competency in carrying meaningful classroom transactions for CWSN.

Therefore, the present study will mainly intend to analyze the different problems faced by the child and will suggest guidelines for effectively implementing the various interventions for the benefits of the target group in Odisha. In the elementary level, parents/SMC members use to play the most vital role in children's education. Parents' attitude again is influenced by various factors, which in turn affect the child's prospects in getting education. This is why I want to undertake this study to know the problems faced by a cwsn child in comparison to a normal child, background of the parents/SMC members as well as their perception on role & necessity of IE volunteers on the overall development CWSN.

Under this study the problems faced by the cwsn children in getting education in the school environment will be investigated. Besides this the BRTs are supposed to visit the schools regularly. It helps to monitor the different CWSN activities of school successfully. It will also help to implement the community mobilization and empowerment programme under a specific time frame.

4. Review of Literature

Over the past decade a considerable amount of research has been conducted and many written policies was framed to change the views and philosophies of how the children with special needs are to be educated. Many organizations worldwide have taken the lead in playing a pivotal role in promoting inclusive education as part of human rights agenda that advocates the increase in participation of all learners in regular schools (Brandon, 2006).

Engel Brecht expressed the same opinion on this matter (2006:256). Respondents' perceptions reflect the reality in South Africa. South Africa has proportionately more learners with barriers to learning who have to be accommodated in mainstream schools because intrinsic and extrinsic barriers to learning exist in the South African school system.

As suggested by Wedell (1978), children's developmental difficulties must be considered as a result of an interaction between their own strengths and weaknesses and those of the environment. Furthermore, the balance of each of these changes over time, as does the interaction between them. Wedell has termed this model one of compensatory interaction. This overview demonstrates that the evaluation of the research evidence examining the diversity of children's needs must be: a) strategic; b) evidence based; and c) inclusive of the views of the various stakeholders

The UN's Standard Rules on the equal opportunities for disabled children (1993) and the UNESCO Salamanca Declaration and Framework for Action (1994) are two initiatives that have encouraged govt. to adopt policies that will increase the participation of all the children in regular schools that meet the needs & respect of all children with special needs. A large number of studies have been conducted on inclusive education and attitudes of the persons who are responsible for implementing inclusive policies and found that the attitude of teachers' is one of the major role in the successful implementation of the inclusive education (Avarmiclis & Norwich, 2002; Ali et al, 2006; Nayak, 2008 and Olufemi et al, 2009).

The study conducted by Weiner (2003) on the attitude of teachers' towards inclusion & identified that teachers' attitude is the 1st and 2nd most important condition necessary for the successful inclusion. The role of teachers' attitude in failure & success of inclusive education is also evident in the findings of most of the researchers (Avarmiclis & Norwich, 2002; Saland, 2005 and Haider, 2008).

In India for the education of children with special needs a number of laws has been framed and in this direction 93rd Amendment to the constitution of India (now renumbered 86th), passed by the Indian Lok Sabha (Lower House) on Nov. 28, 2001 moves it mandatory for the Government to provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age group of 6-14 years with its preamble clarifying that all includes children with disabilities as well. Recently Govt. of India also took a greater step and passed a Right to Education (RTE Act, 2010) which is none the fundamental right to the child (6-14 years) to get free and compulsory education up to elementary level.

Kaufinan & Chick (1996). Indicate that inclusion and special needs carry negative connotations which include feelings that there is insufficient support, resources, the policies are confused and that inclusion has been imposed from top.

Engelbrecht et al. (1999). Found the drastic shortage of specialist rooms, classrooms, sports facilities as well as furniture and equipment means it would be sometime before equity is reached in KZN, not mentioning preparation for inclusive education. If these shortages are not addressed they will act as major barriers to learning and development thus exclude many learners as a result a serious breakdown in the culture of learning will be experienced.

Bothma et al. (2000) Argue that teachers who have had training in special education have a more positive attitude towards learners who differ from or have needs that are more special than those of average learners. Successful inclusion depends on a belief that all students deserve to be accommodated in regular classroom setting. Teachers should take note that children do not progress at the same time.

Prinsloo (2001) Suggested that inclusion can only be successful if teachers receive additional training and such training should be ongoing, identity shortcomings in teacher participation, be planned and organized by teachers themselves to ensure that it meets the needs of the school community.

A review of the related literature revealed a little is known about the attitude of teachers' in Haryana towards the inclusion of students with special needs. The increasingly diverse characteristics of students of children to be educated in Haryana are causing government officials, parents; teacher educators etc. to examine the benefits of educating are children in a heterogeneous environment. Regardless of gender, caste, colour, creed, social status as well as disability, it becomes clear to many that the needs of all children must be met and their differences must be welcomed, respect and nurtured in heterogeneous environment. The attitude of teachers towards

inclusion of children with special need into regular school is vital in determining the success of the govt. efforts in implementing policies.

4.1. *International Multidisciplinary Journal Rekha, Vikas Kumar (15-19)*

Lack of effective in-service and pre-service or training regarding the implementation of inclusion and special needs reinforces the high levels of stress associated with adapting the curriculum to the needs of and sustaining an effective learning environment for all learners in their classroom. The experience of the researcher is that inclusion has occurred without the understanding of the implications for teachers who have much of the responsibility for implementing it. Teachers have a diffuse knowledge about inclusive education. In service education training should be intended to directly enhance the educational provision offered to learners, and affords individual teacher the opportunity to critically look at their practices. In service training should be closely related to ongoing development and strategic planning

4.2. *The Challenges*

Several novel initiatives have been taken up to address the divergent needs of special children. An endeavour has also been made to develop in teachers, the necessary attitude, skills and competencies required to deal effectively with children with various special educational needs. The focus of SSA is now on reaching out to those out of school CWSN, not covered so far and developing a strategy that will ensure that every child with special needs receives continuing on site support. This perhaps is the biggest challenge of all and a crucial determinant of the success of the inclusive education programme under SSA.

However, there are a few important issues in Inclusive Education that also need to be adequately addressed. These have been listed below:

- The percentage of CWSN identified seems to be low, being only 1.54 % of the total child population in SSA in comparison to Census 2001 data, wherein 2.1% of the population has been found to have some disability. Hence, States should streamline their identification procedures
- Retention of CWSN after their identification and enrollment should be monitored and encouraged so that they complete the cycle of elementary education
- States to maintain their efforts to provide more assistive devices to CWSN as 76.4% children have got the required equipment
- Effective monitoring mechanisms should be developed by the States to assess both the quantitative and qualitative progress and problems in IE
- Emphasis should now to be on classroom practices and teaching methods adopted by teachers for effective classroom management of CWSN
- To ensure that every child with special needs receives continuing on site support
- Involvement of more NGOs in the IE programme of SSA needs to be strengthened
- Only 47.14% schools have been made barrier-free. This aspect of IE in SSA needs more focus
- Although States have increased pace of expenditure, it needs to be further geared up.

4.3. *Educational Strategies for CWSN under SSA in Odisha*

Strategies for providing learning opportunities to CWSN in the formal schools are based on the principle that the school system be prepared for inclusive education, where appropriate, with clear understanding that all children have the right to attend school and that it is the responsibility of the school to accommodate differences in learners.

In Odisha, the focus is that children with special needs learn in the same schools as their non-disabled peers with the support necessary for them to be successful. The SSA parameters for implementation of the intervention for education of CWSN include provisions like monetary and physical support, planning strategies and the resource support etc. The SSA provisions are

- Support with up to Rs.3000/- per child per year for inclusion of the CWSN.
- Formulation of District Plan for children with special needs within Rs.3000/- per child norm.
- Encouragement of the involvement of resource institutions for capacity building and mobilization, counseling etc.

The various activities implemented under SSA are identification of CWSN through medical assessment camps, enrollment of children in neighboring schools and provision of appropriate equipments to them. The process of identification of CWSN has been taken up in all the districts through the ICDS workers, and teachers from the inception of the project. During the year 2008-09, 1,26, 245 CWSN have been identified out of which 1,15, 344 have been enrolled in different schools/AIE and 675 have been covered under home-based education. The enrollment figure for the CWSN over the entire state of Orissa is 91.4% which falls short of the SSA target; yet the progress shows a satisfactory trend.

- 328 Block Resource Teachers on IED have been engaged in the blocks and selected ULBs to provide support for education of the CWSN. They have already been imparted two-phase orientation training (7 days and 5 days) on different aspects of educating of CWSN.
- Teachers in general schools are oriented on classroom management of disabled children so as to facilitate special approaches to education for children with special needs.
- The members of SMCs have been provided training on Inclusive Education as a part of community training.

- 14,578 CWSN have been provided with aids and appliances. Theme-based programmes are being conducted at regular intervals to develop self-esteem and self-confidence of the CWSN.
- Provision of Block resource centers on Inclusive education have been made in all blocks and fund has been provided for procurement of resource materials to make it operational. Thirty Audio meters have been provided to all 30 districts at the rate of one per district to conduct audio logical test of the Hearing Impaired children. Similarly, 60 Speech trainers have been provided to different special schools for conducting regular speech training of the Hearing Impaired children.
- Ear mould laboratories have been set up in all the 30 districts to provide ear moulds to the Hearing Impaired children. Loop Induction systems have been provided in 40 schools so that Hearing Impaired children would be able to listen to the teachers properly. Ramps and handrails have been constructed in different schools where Orthopedically Handicapped children are reading. Construction of ramp is considered as an integral part of the Civil Work.

5. Objectives of Research

This impact assessment study will be undertaken with the following objectives:

- To study the problems of CWSN child in getting education for all-round development of CWSN.
- To evaluate the process and procedures undertaken for implementation of various facilities already given to CWSN.
- To study the trend of student enrolment of CWSN in general schools.
- An endeavour has also been made to develop the necessary attitude, skills and competencies required for teachers,
- To investigate the factors that contributed for getting fair education in a common school
- To develop a strategy that will ensure that every child with special needs receives continuing on site support.
- To investigate the attitude of teachers, pupils and parents towards integrating general children with special needs children in schools.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of existing supporting resources and to ascertain the areas for their strengthening.
- To make a comparative analysis between the areas with full resource support and with partial resource support provided by SSA
- know various approaches related to education of children with special needs;
- Create awareness on educational status of CWSN in India.
- Understand various assumptions on special education, integrated education and inclusive education.

6. Proposed Methodology

The study will involve the use of both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data would be collected through direct interview with teachers/volunteers/parents/smc members. It will be done by developing a structured interview schedule.

7. Universe of Study

Cuttack District was established in 1803 under the Bengal Presidency of the British India along with two other Districts namely Puri and Balasore, these three districts along with Odiya speaking areas formed Orissa in 1936. Cuttack city became the capital of the then Orissa Division in 1816. From then onward till 1948, when the capital was shifted to Bhubaneswar, the city remained the administrative head quarters of Orissa. Cuttack district was divided into four districts on 1st April,1993 namely Cuttack, Jajpur, Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara. The district has three Sub-divisions, 34 Police Stations, 15 Tahasils, 14 Community Development Blocks, 1 Municipal Corporation, 1 Municipality, 2 NACs, 342 Gram Panchayats, 1950 villages, 3 Parliamentary Constituencies and nine Assembly Constituencies. It is bounded on the north by Jajpur district, on the east by Kendrapara, on the south by Khurda district and in the west by Dhenkanal District. Total population of Cuttack district as per 2011 census is 26.18 lacks which is 6.24% of the State population. The district's total male population is 13.39 lakhs and female population is 12.79 lakhs. Cuttack has a sex ratio of 955 females for every 1000 males.

Cuttack is found to be educationally most advanced districts in Odisha with the highest literacy level of 84.2 per cent in 2011. The male literacy rate is 90.51 % where as the female literacy rate is 77.64%. Universe of study in the present topic is proposed to be the State of Odisha and particularly in Cuttack district (Both rural and urban area).

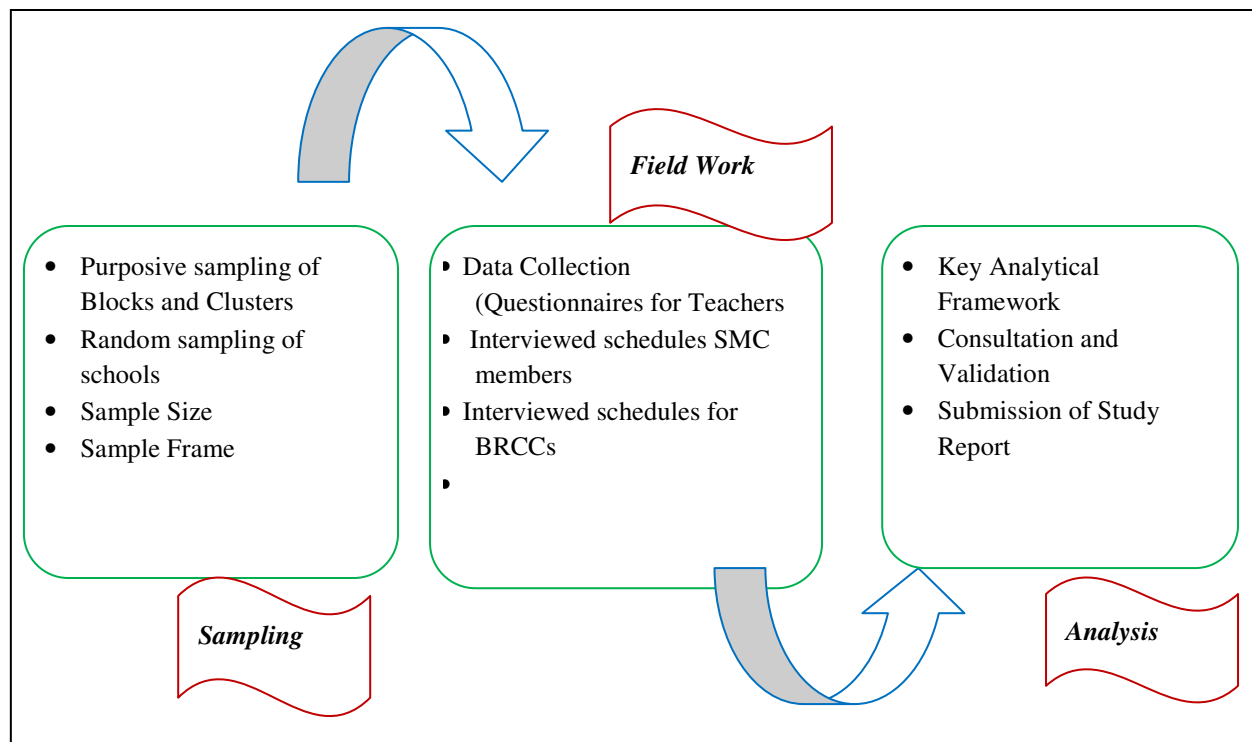


Table 1

8. Study Design

8.1. Area of Study and Sample Size

Cuttack district of Odisha will be taken for the present study for population purposively. The survey will be conducted in two blocks of Cuttack district viz Nischintakoili, and Mahanga blocks. For the purpose of this study, multi stage sampling will be done to select the Cluster, schools and Volunteers. In the first phase, 2 clusters from each block were selected randomly, following which 5 schools from each cluster will randomly selected. As a whole 10 schools from each block will be selected. For the present study, 40 teachers/Volunteers, and 80 SMC Members/Parents will be selected (two and four respectively from each sampled school) and will be interviewed by developing a structured interview schedule.

8.2. Research Procedure

In each school teachers were briefed on the Government policy on special education, the purpose of the study and indicators will be used to identify children with special educational needs.

All teachers will be interviewed in their respective classrooms where observations will be carried out. Interviews were about the teacher's attitude towards integration, while observations were to determine classroom facilities and their accessibility to children with special educational needs. Children in all classes were informed by their teachers about the purpose of the visit and were asked to report if they had certain disabilities or problems like epilepsy which had not been reported to the teacher. A randomly selected sample of three families of children in each school will be interviewed to elicit their opinions and or attitudes towards integrated education. General information about the school will be given by head-teachers or their deputies. Information concerning the number of children with special educational needs will be sought from teachers in each class in every school. Teachers', pupils' (standards 5, 6, 7) and parents' opinion towards integration Will be sought. The rating will be done per district as presented on Table 4. The teachers, pupils and parents who will be in favour of integrated education will be rated positive, those who will not want it at all will be rated negative and those who were not sure of what they wanted will be rated uncertain. Observations will be done regarding facilities and their accessibility to children with special needs.

8.3. Mode of Data Collection

The following tools of the data collection will be used in the present study.

- School Schedule: The information regarding disability will be included in the school schedule.
- Questionnaire for Head teachers/Volunteers & Parents: Semi-Structured Questionnaires will be used for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. In the present study, Semi structured interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders at the village level, including school head master/teacher and SMC Members, etc. to understand their perspectives regarding achievement of the students, role of IE Volunteers in promoting CWSN education, etc at elementary level. These two schedules will be filled up through observation of the investigator and with the help of the teachers

- In-depth Interview Schedules for BRCCs and CRCCs: In-depth Interview Schedules are basic and most important instruments to be used during the qualitative data collection. In the present study, in-depth interviews were conducted with the concerned functionaries of education at Block level. This part of discussions enabled us to understand the details of the education schemes, its organizational and management structure, implementation mechanism and CWSN trend of enrolment at elementary level.

Analytical survey method will be used for the study. A variety of research tools will be developed and used to collect response from students, teachers, parents, SMC members and other villagers. School related information will be collected from the Head Masters or Teachers-in-Charge of the schools. The present study and the conclusions will be drawn on the basis of results deciphered after applying the tools of statistical analysis so as to make the study empirical. Percentage and average scores for various indicators will be calculated. The analysis of the data will be done with the help of appropriate diagrams and graphics.

9. References

- i. Al-Khatteeb, J. (2004). Teaching students in inclusive schools. Dar Waal. Amman, Jordan.
- ii. Disability Status in India (2003). Rehabilitation Council of India, New Delhi.
- iii. Hannah, M. E. (1998). Teacher attitudes toward children with disabilities: an ecological analysis. In: YUKER, H. E. (ED) Attitudes toward persons with disabilities. New York: Springer, pp. 154-171.
- iv. Hegarty, S. and Alur M. (2005). Education and Children with Special Needs, Sage Publications, New Delhi.
- v. Leyser, Y. Kapperman, G, and Keller, R. (1994). Teacher attitudes toward mainstreaming: A cross-cultural study in six nations. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. 9, 1-15.
- vi. Puri, M and Abraham, A. (2004). Handbook of Inclusive Education for Educators, Administrators, and planners. Sage Publications, New Delhi.
- vii. Bothma, M., Gravett, S. & Swart, E. (2000). The attitudes of primary school teachers towards inclusive education. *South African Journal of Education*: 20 (3): 200-204
- viii. Clark, C., Dyson, A. & Milward, A.eds (1995). Towards inclusive schools. London: Fulton Publishers.
- ix. Engelbrecht, P., Swart, E. & Ellof, I. (1999). Stress and coping skills of the teachers with leamerwith. Downs' syndrome in inclusive classrooms. *South African Journal of Education*.21(4): 256-259.
- x. Kaufinan, C.C.& Chick, K. (1996) Inclusive classroom practices. *Journal of Education for Teachers*. Vol. 22 no. 2: 172-179
- xi. Kirk, S.A. & Gallagher, J. J. (1989). Educating exceptional children. Boston. Houghton Mifflin Company.
- xii. Ptinsloo, E. (2001). Working towards inclusive education in South African classrooms. *South African Journal of Education*.21 (4) 344-348.

Annexure

Research Questions:

1. Background information

District

Name of school.....

Class	No. of children in school	Age range	No. of teachers/ grade	Teacher / pupil ratio	No. of children with a disability	No. of repeaters
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						

2. Number of children with specific disabilities

Class	Visual impairment	Hearing impairment	Physical impairment	Learning problems	Others - Specify Age range
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

3. Attitudes towards integration

Class	Teachers		Disabled pupils		Non-Disabled pupils		Parents/community	
	+ve	-ve	+ve	-ve	+ve	-ve	+ve	-ve
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								

General Comments

.....

4. Specific information

1. What is the longest distance a disabled child has to travel to get to school?

.....

2. What does he/she use to get to school?

Transport: Vehicle.....

Horse.....

Bicycle.....

3. If walking, is he/she:
Accompanied? Yes No
Independent? Yes No

5. How were the students identified? Yes No
Parent reported
Doctor reported
Community reported
Next of kin reported
Teacher suspicious
Teacher discovered/

6. What facilities are available for students with disabilities?

In Schools	In Community

7. How do teachers cope with the student with disabilities in their respective classes?
.....
.....
.....

8. Interviewer's observations
- Types of resources available
 - General interaction
 - Teacher/student interaction
 - Accessibility:

Class
Play
Recreation
Toilet
Water

9. General remarks by the teacher about children with Disabilities
.....
.....