

Are our Schools and Community Really Prepared for Imparting Inclusive Education: A Study on the Awareness and Attitude of the Stakeholders?

Sandhya Sharma^a, Dillip Kumar Giri^b

^aResearch Scholar, Dr.K.N.Modi University, Niwai, Rajasthan, India

^bSenior Advisor, Department of Quality Assurance and Planning, Institute of Dental Sciences, Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir State, India

Abstract

In this study, a sincere attempt was made by the investigator to study the awareness and attitude of the secondary school principals, teachers of Agra Education District on the introduction of inclusive education in the Secondary Schools. A total of 200 teachers and 100 principals were involved in the study.

The major findings of the study say the awareness level of the principals of different categories of the schools on inclusive education is more than average. Both male and female principals are equally concerned about inclusive education at the secondary stage. Their critical IQ shows that they are sensitive towards the issue and possess a value system within them. The data of teachers reveal that they are equally competent in handling this category of children because they are motivated towards their profession and continue their intellectual pursuit through various professional development programs organized by the government.

KEYWORDS-clusive education, people with disabilities, educational policy, India

Rationale:

Inclusive Education has become a very popular learning strategy to educate students with disabilities (Dillip&Ashish 2012). In this strategy, the differently able children are educated with their normal peers in the same class through an adjustable learning environment with the necessary support provided to them and their families (Dukes & Lamar Dukes, 2006, p.4). Though in many countries it has received very good prominence, yet its implementation & practice has not defined properly (Collins, 2003, p.457). There are many challenges faced by differently able students so far as the behaviour of their peers, teachers and school administrators towards them (Saha (2011). Inclusion advocates from the social model disability is a system to assimilate children with varying learning needs (Lindsay, 2007). Dewitt (2011) who has been a teacher for inclusive classes agreed that the role of teachers is very special in inclusive education. Many schools of developed countries have participated in this inclusive movement in the late 70s and 80s and received huge success but the situation of the developing country like India is not very inspiring (Samuels, 2010 & Saha, 2011).

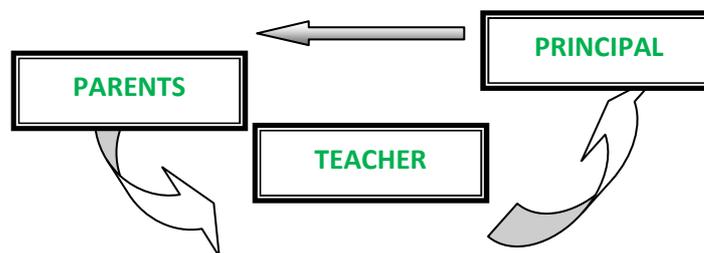
In India, an estimated number of children attending school was 192 million, where the total number of disabled population (including adults) was 21.9 million (2001 census). Thus, the Literacy Rate was 65.38% for normal children and 45% for the disabled population. Govt. of India enacted the National Action Plan for Inclusion in Education of Child and Youth with Disabilities (IECYD) in 2005 emphasizes the inclusion of children and young persons with disabilities in all general educational settings from early childhood to higher education. The goal of this action plan is "to ensure the inclusion of children and youth with disabilities in available general

educational settings by providing them with a learning environment that is available, accessible, affordable and appropriate.

Furthermore the centrally sponsored scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) had set time-bound targets for the achievement of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) by 2010 with 'Zero rejection' as its cornerstone. The Scheme of Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS) under Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) from 2013 aims to enable all students with disabilities, to pursue further four years of secondary schooling after completing eight years of elementary schooling in an inclusive and enabling environment.

It is a fact that Inclusion is a complex issue to implement and the first step in this regard is to develop a curriculum that is a powerful tool (Swann, 1988). To develop a curriculum for special education and its inclusion in general teacher preparation programs, the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) made a historic collaboration with National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) on January 19, 2005.

The National Curriculum Framework 2005 recommends that the curriculum of school should be designed in a way to be flexible and appropriate to accommodate the diversity of school children including those with disabilities in both cognitive and non-cognitive areas. An important policy development after 1992 has been the enactment of Persons with Disabilities (Equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation) Act 1995. Article 26 (a) of the Act makes it a statutory responsibility on the part of central, states and local govt. to provide free education in an appropriate environment for all children with disabilities up to the age of 18 yrs. Article 26 (b) of the Act calls upon appropriate Govt. and local authorities to promote the integration of students in normal schools.



Despite very optimistic legislation, the current environment of inclusive education in India is not very encouraging and the implementation has been meeting with negativity in schools and communities, especially in rural areas (Sharma 1993). The researchers have found that there is a poor sensitivity of stakeholders such as school administrators, teachers, parents and peers and lack of readiness of the system become additional factors contributing to the deprivation of disable children. Additionally, the some parents of normal children also creating barrier in the path of inclusion by complaining their existence with their normal children, also prevents the exclusion of children with disabilities from the mainstream (Ankur&Neeraja 2013). Therefore, it has become essential for an intervention program for parents, teachers and school administrators for the successful implementation of the program.

Furthermore, it is also important to develop an effective strategy and training programs not only for the teachers, parents, and principals is required but it is essentials for the peer students how they should accept there disable peer members and become supportive in their education (Ramalingam, Deepa 1996). Originated as a challenge to the restrictions imposed by the existing models of mainstreaming and integration.

Uttar Pradesh is a state of the Republic of India is the most populous state in India. The state has achieved only 68% literacy rate, where male literacy stands at 77.28

percent while female literacy is at 57.18 percent (As per 2011). Considering public interest litigation (PIL) in 2017 the Supreme Court of India has asked the Govt. of Uttar Pradesh to come up with a mechanism for the implementation of Inclusive Education in its schools so that students' suffering from disability are not kept away. This has made the state Govt. to take numerous actions, such as a review of legislation and budget, free education, scholarship facilities, the appointment of special education counsellors, provision for resource room and training of stakeholders, etc.

However, despite the above efforts of the Govt, the success of inclusive education in the state is very negligible. It is found that only 32% of special needs students are coming to secondary class and the dropout rate is very high. Therefore only 12% are completing high school education and only 13% are completing higher secondary school examinations. Considering the above facts are alarming for the future of inclusive education in the state research was conducted from May 2017 to December 2019.

As cited above by many researchers the essential components for the success of this scheme depend on the awareness of the primary stakeholders, such as principals, teachers, parents on inclusive education and their attitude towards the introduction of this at the secondary stage. Considering the scope and limitation of the study, the data was collected from the teachers and principals of secondary schools.

Objectives

- 1- To study the awareness of male and female principals, teachers and parents on inclusive education for disabled in secondary schools under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- 2- To study the attitude of male and female principals, teachers, parents, towards the introduction of inclusive education for disabled in secondary schools under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- 3- To find out the correlation between the awareness and attitude of the respondents on inclusive education at secondary schools.

The hypothesis of the Study

- a. There is no significant difference in the awareness level of male and female principals, teachers and parents on Inclusive Education.
- b. There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female Principals, teachers and parents of secondary school towards the introduction of Inclusive Education in secondary schools.
- c. There does not exist any significant correlation between the awareness and attitude levels of the respondents.

Scope & Delimitation of Study

The study will be delimited only to the study of awareness and attitude of Principals, Teachers, and Parents of the schools located in Agra Education district, Uttar Pradesh.

Research Design

The Research Design of the problem entails mainly survey method, multiple levels of analysis and data collection. The methods are quantitative in nature which includes a questionnaire survey.

Variables used in the study

The Independent Variables are the demographic variables of the respondents and the Dependent Variables are the response and opinion of the respondents on the Awareness and Attitude on Inclusive Education.

Population and Sample of Study

The study encompassed the target population of 30 secondary school principals, 60, secondary school teachers and 60 parents.

Tool and Technique of Data Collection

- Questionnaire on awareness of the respondents of Inclusive Education
- Questionnaire on the attitude of the respondents towards the introduction of Inclusive Education for disabled

The procedure of Data Collection

The data for the present study were collected by circulating and administrating the questionnaire on the sample the investigator has personally collected data as all schools were located in the urban area.

Statistical Treatment:

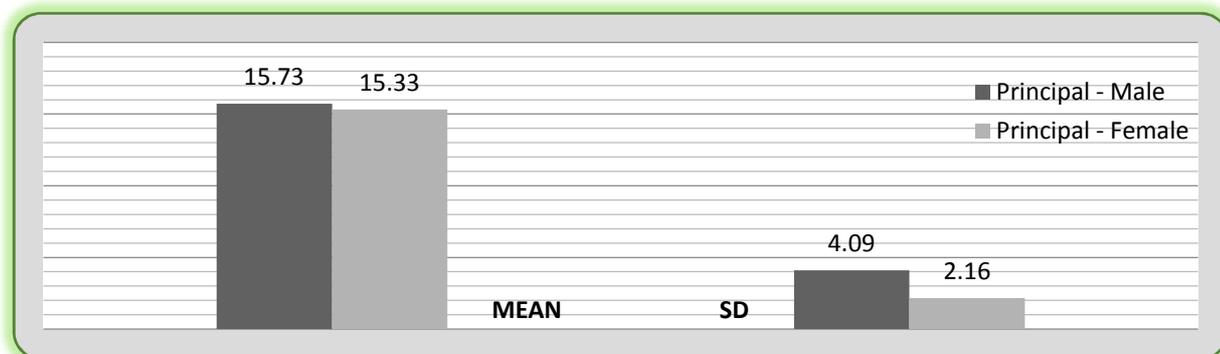
In the present study, the researcher had used mean, SD and ‘t’ tests like the statistical technique to test the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis.

Analysis of the Results

The first hypothesis states that “there is no significant difference in the awareness level of male and female principals, teachers and parents on Inclusive Education”.

SL.	AWARENESS	N	MEAN	SD	‘t’ TEST	SIGNIFICANCE OF HYPOTHESES
1	Principal-Male	15	15.73	4.09	0.3345	Not significant at 0.05 level
2	Principal-Female	15	15.33	2.16		

Figure 4.1.1.a



SL.	AWARENESS	N	MEAN	SD	‘t’ TEST	SIGNIFICANCE OF HYPOTHESES
1	Teacher-Male	30	17.13	2.33	0.4249	Not significant at 0.05 level
2	Teacher-Female	30	16.83	3.08		

Figure 4.1.1.b

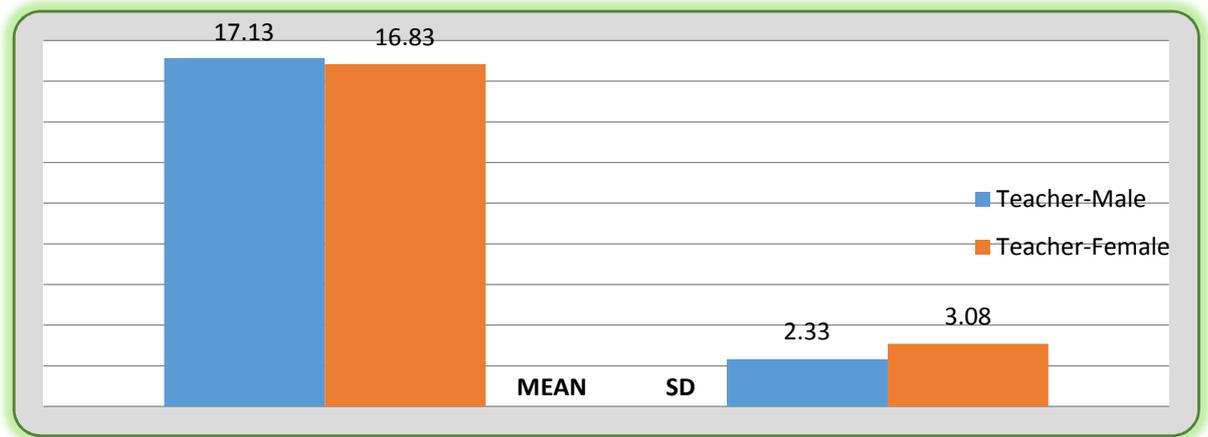
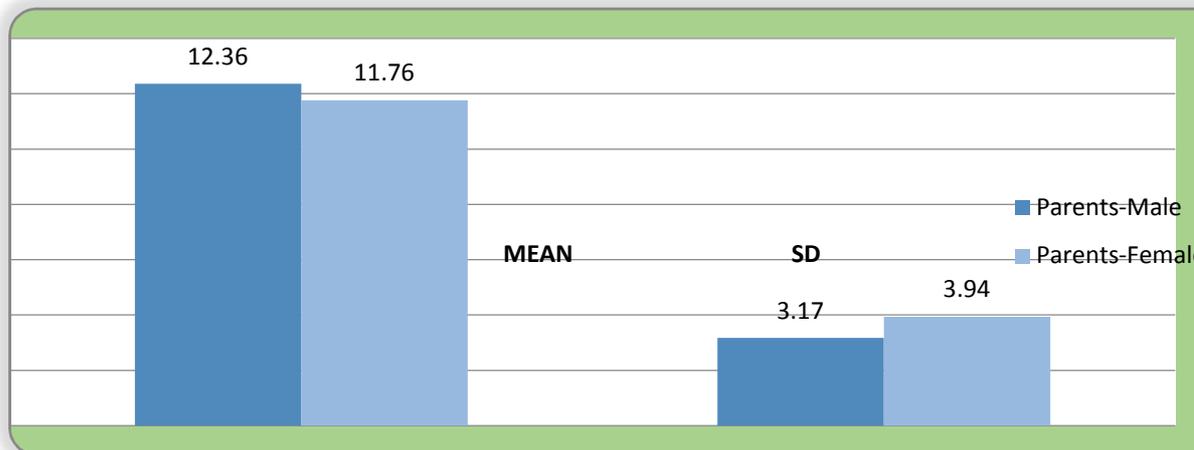


TABLE 4.1.1.c

SL.	AWARENESS	N	MEAN	SD	't' TEST	SIGNIFICANCE OF HYPOTHESES
1	Parents-Male	30	12.36	3.17	0.6487	Not significant at 0.05 level
2	Parents-Female	30	11.76	3.94		

Figure-4.1.1.c



The second hypothesis states that “there is no significant difference between the attitudes of male and female teachers of the secondary school towards the introduction of Inclusive Education for the disabled”.

TABLE4.1.2

SL	TEACHER	MEAN	SD	N	't'-VALUE	Significance level
1	MALE	47.84	10.413	19	2.134	Significant at 0.05 level
2	FEMALE	34.16	22.677	24		

Figure 4.1.2

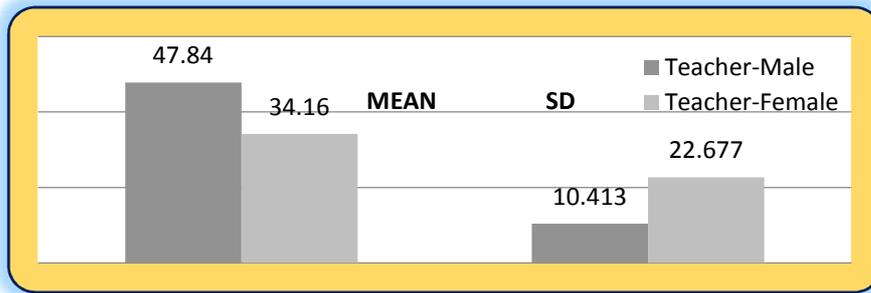


TABLE 4.1.3

SL	PRINCIPAL	MEAN	SD	N	't' - VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE OF HYPOTHESES
1	MALE	84.66	15.82	15	1.7927	Null hypothesis accepted at 0.01 level
2	FEMALE	73.66	17.72	15		

Figure 4.1.3

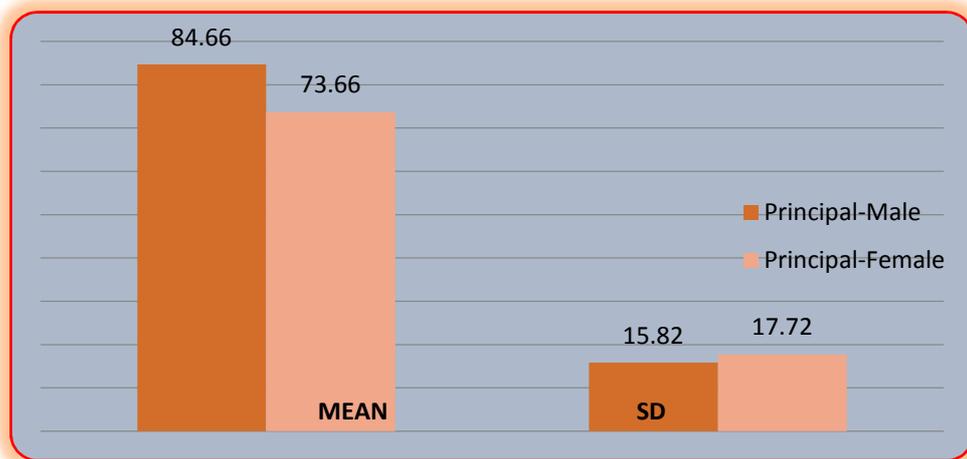


TABLE 4.1.4

SL	PARENTS	MEAN	SD	N	T VALUE	Significance level
1	MALE	40.8	10.12	20	1.773	Not Significant at 0.05 level
2	FEMALE	34.21	13.002	19		

Figure

4.1.4



Coefficient of Correlation between Awareness and attitude of the respondents on the Inclusive Education

Variable	Mean	S.D.	Df	r-value	Result
Awareness	255.42	146.35	323	-0.115*	Significant
Attitude	18.32	9.35			

** = Significant at 0.01 level of Significance.

* = Significant at 0.05 level of Significance

level of Significance

Major Findings

On the basis of the interpretation of data based on scientific investigation, the following results are derived. It is found that the awareness level of Principals of either gender on the Inclusive Education does not differ as per ‘t’ value is concerned. This means both the group keeps them abreast of the issues of Inclusive Education and effectively aware of the recent development in this regard, which is the positive sign for the implementation and success of this national mission. However, the awareness level of male and female teachers differ significantly.

The male teachers are better aware than their female counterparts on inclusive education. So far as the awareness of parents on inclusive education is concerned it was found that the male parents are more aware of inclusive education than the female parents. The result on the attitude of the teachers showed that there was a significant difference between the attitude level of the secondary school male and female teachers as the male teachers had a better attitude toward the introduction of inclusive education in secondary schools. Principals’ play a crucial role in the implementation of Govt. policy and programs in the schools. Thus, their attitude is vital. The result showed that there exists a significant difference in the attitude level of male and female principals of a secondary school on the introduction of inclusive education.

However, both male and female parents showed positive in their attitude towards the introduction of Inclusive Education for the disabled.

Discussion on results

The major findings of the study say the awareness level of the principals of different categories of the schools on inclusive education was more than average. Both male and female principals are equally concerned about inclusive education at the secondary stage. Their critical IQ shows that they are sensitive towards the issue and possess a value system within them. The data of teachers reveal that they are equally competent in handling this category of children because they are motivated towards their profession and continue their intellectual pursuit through various professional development programs on the inclusive education organized by the government.

The results show that the main problem of the system of inclusive education in India is the lack of specially trained teachers and a detailed developed legal framework. The Rehabilitation Council of India predicted that an additional 98,000 teachers would be needed to be trained by the end of 2020 (Sharma and Deppeler, 2005). The lack of necessary conditions in schools and the lack of government policies and finances are the main barriers to inclusive education.

The parents being the most important stakeholders of the education system found to be positive toward their awareness level. Since the findings say that they are also very much concerned with secondary education for disabled children. This may be because of effective efforts of print electronic media, social action groups on the welfare of differently able children.

The parents, teachers and the principal show their positive attitude for the introduction of inclusive education at the secondary stage which is a part of national government agenda to enhance constitutional obligations to universalize value-based secondary

education for all with zero tolerance. The Govt. of Uttar Pradesh has been implementing all Govt. policy and program with commitment. The government used to organize principals, teachers and parents workshop in order to sensitize the whole community on this issue. The study also reveals that there is a positive correlation between the awareness and attitude of the respondents.

As it is a fact that educated people are better decision-makers in comparison to uneducated. Principals are the most important personalities between the government and the public, if they are motivated towards any new development enunciated by the government then the rate of the success of the program is more. The teachers being the role model of society have the ability to make or mar the society. They are the real workforce for any kind of program for its success. The present study, therefore, is crucial in many ways firstly it is a research work on a social issue that needs immediate cooperation from all the stakeholders.

Secondly, the problem was studied on parents who contribute the most significant part of the education system. Though some places the study found a little difference between two groups of respondents so far is their awareness level is concerned but these are the very mild differences.

References:

1. Inclusive education in India: interpretation, implementation, and issues. Research Monograph № 15. 2007 URL: <http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/1863/1/PTA15.pdf>
2. Examples of inclusive education. URL: <http://www.unicef.org/rosa/InclusiveInd.pdf>
3. Thomas, P. (2005b) Mainstreaming Disability in Development: India Country The report, London: Disability Knowledge and Research. URL: http://disabilitykar.net/research/pol_india.html
4. Rubtcova, Mariia, Oleg Pavenkov, Vladimir Pavenkov, and Vasilieva Elena. "The Language of Altruism: Corpus-Based Conceptualization of Social Category for Management Sociology." *Asian Social Science* 11, no. 13 (2015): 289.
5. Rao L.G., and Reddy, S.H.K. (2004). Organizational aspects of special schools in Mental Retardation in India. *International Journal of Rehabilitation Research*. 27(2): 127-133
6. Rao, I. (2003). Inclusive Education in the Indian Context. http://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/inclusive_education_indian.php. Accessed on 28 July 2015.
7. Rubtcova, Mariia V. and Martianova, Natalia, Dealtruization as a Crisis of Altruism: Theoretical Framework (March 13, 2015). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2577945>
8. Pavenkov, Oleg V; Pavenkov, Vladimir G; Rubtcova, Mariia V; Narayanamurthy, Hemalatha. 2015. Inclusive Education in India and Russia: A Comparative Analysis of Legal Frameworks. *Rajagiri Journal of Social Development* 7 (2): 123-136.
9. Pavenkov, O. V.; Rubtcova, M. P. 2016. Value orientations to the inclusive education teachers in Russia: results of a pilot study. *Dilemmas Contemporaneos-EducacionPolitica Y Valores*. 4: 1 Page: 13
10. Pavenkov, O., Pavenkov, V., Rubtcova, M. 2015. The altruistic behavior: characteristic of future teachers of inclusive education in Russia. *International Conference Psiworld 2014 - 5th Edition Volume: 187 Pages: 10-15*
11. Rubtcova, M.; Pavenkov, O.; Varlamova, J.; et al. (2016) How to identify negative

- attitudes towards inclusive education: Critical discourse analysis of Russian transcripts using role and reference grammar. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*. 5 (5) Pages: 183-196
12. Sharma U., and Deppeler J. (2005). *Integrated Education in India: Challenges and Prospects*. <http://dsq-sds.org/article/view/524/701/> Accessed on 28 July 2016.
 13. Thomas, P. (2005). *Mainstreaming Disability in Development: India Country Report*. http://disabilitykar.net/research/pol_india.html. Accessed on 28 July 2016.
 14. UNICEF India, the United Nations. (2012). *The government of India announces plans to make education disabled-friendly by 2020*. http://www.unicef.org/india/media_610.htm. Accessed on 28 July 2016.
 15. The Rehabilitation Council of India Act (1992). http://www.svayam.com/pdf/the_rci_act-1992&amendment_act_2000.pdf. Accessed on 28 July 2016.
 16. Fact Sheet on Persons with Disabilities, UN Enable, The United Nations. <<http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/toolaction/pwdfs.pdf>>.
 17. Hegarty, Seamus, and MithuAlur, *Education and Children with Special Needs: From Segregation to Inclusion*, Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 2002, 56
 18. Kalyanpur, Maya., "Equality, Quality, and Quantity: Challenges in Inclusive Education Policy and Service Provision in India.," *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. 12.3 (2008): 244
 19. *People with Disabilities in India: From Commitments to Outcomes,* The World Bank Human Development Unit, South Asia Region, July 2009, <http://www.wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSContentServer/IB/2009/09/02/000334955_20090902041543/Rendered/PDF/502090WP0Peopl1Box0342042B01PUBLIC1.pdf>.
 20. *People with Disabilities in India: From Commitments to Outcomes,* The World Bank Human Development Unit, South Asia Region, July 2009, Web. 25 September 2011. *Policy guidelines on Inclusion in Education*, UNESCO, The United Nations, 2009, web. <<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0017/001778/177849e.pdf>>.
 21. Sharma, Umesh, and Deppeler, Joanne, "Integrated Education in India: Challenges and Prospects," *DisabilityStudies Quarterly*, 25.1 (2005), Society for Disability Studies, Web. 13 February 2012, <<http://dsqsds.org/article/view/524/701>>.
 22. Aminabhavi, Vijaylaxmi A. (1996). A study of adjustment ability of physically disabled and abled students. *Journal of Community Guidance and Research*. Vol.13 (1), 13-17.
 23. Arya, Saroj; Venkatesan, S.; Prakasam, B.; Surya and Menon, D.K. (1997) prevalence of disability among pre-school children in rural areas. *Disabilities and Impairments*, vol II (1), 1-7.
 24. Buch M.B. (1993-2000) *Sixth Survey of Research in Education*.
 28. Gupta, S.K.; Chughtai I.B.; Grewal, J.S.; Jain, V.K.; Malviya, R.; Khare, S. and Malviya, P. (1996). A study of the incidence and nature of learning disabilities at the end of class II and to evolve preventive strategies. Independent study, Bhopal:Regional Institute of Education (DPEP study).*Indian Education Abstracts*. *Journal of All India Association for Education Research*.
 25. Kala Parasuram (2006). *Variables that Affect Teachers' Attitudes Towards Disability and Inclusive Education in Mumbai, India*, *Disability and Society* vol 21, ISS.3, 2006.
 26. Kamalam, M. (1996). *Capacity building of the teachers in educating the mildly mentally retarded primary school children*. Ph.D. Edu. Avinashlingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for women, Coimbatore.

27. Kathleen Tait, Nola Purdie (2000). Attitude Towards Disability:Teacher Education for Inclusive Environment in an Australian University, International Journal of Disability, Development, and Education, vol. 47, 155.1, 2000.
28. Paranjape, Sandhya (1996). Achievement of normal and hearing handicapped pupils at the end of the Primary Cycle-Disabilities and Impairments vol. 19 (2), 73-86.
29. Prasad, S. and Srivastava, A.N. (1992). Perceptual Motor Problems in learning disabled and non-learning disabled children. Disabilities and Impairment. Vol 6 (142) 15-24.
30. Ramalingam, Deepa (1996). Development and effectiveness of strategy training program for Cognitive learning among non-learning disabled learning disabled and slow learners. Unpublished M.Ed. Special Edu. Dissertation, SNDT women's university, Mumbai.
31. Sharma, G. (1993) A Study of certain factors related to the learning disabilities among Primary School children, Disabilities and impairments. Vol 17 (2), 18-28.
32. Swarup, S. and Sharma, V. (1993). Effect of cognitive-behavioral training on the written syntax of the learning disabled children. In, N. Venkataiah (Ed.) Reading in Special Education (130-157). Ambala Cantt:The Associated Publishers.
33. Vaijyanthi, R. and Meera,S. (1997). A study of the academic problems of the learning disabled children in the primary schools. Res. High JADU, 7, 95-99.
34. Zaveri, L. (2001), Development of awareness modules on inclusive Education for students with disabilities for administrators and teachers of general schools. Unpublished M.Ed. Dissertation center of special Education, SNDT women's University, Mumbai.