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Inclusion of Disabled Children in Normal School: Institution Centric Challenges

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Abstract:

From broader perspective, Inclusive education is an educational model based on universal inclusion of all types of students irrespective of socio-cultural and physiological disadvantages in the same classroom setting. With reference to educational inclusion of physiologically and psychologically disadvantage children, though academic and research world have considered this model as appropriate one and accordingly policy framers have progressed much but It's successful implementation is not barriers free. In research literature though good number of studies have highlighted macro level problems like low funding, inappropriate curricular integration process etc but number of grass root level problems also negatively contribute for successful implementation of this design. In this review paper attempt has made to explore multiple types of problems associated with teachers, institutions and parents in the inclusive educational settings. Finally, a conceptual model has been proposed where broadly all these problems have been categories as structural and psychological.

Keyword: Inclusive education, Disability, institutional barrier

Introduction:

Inclusive education is a global agenda, which propose for educating all types of children irrespective of their socio-cultural and physiological background within the same classroom (Salamanca report-1994). This educational model provides opportunity for all students to enter access quality education and develop the skills they need to thrive. From human rights point of view and from educational implication point of view, inclusive education has positive academic and socialisation effect on students. Studying in classroom having multiple diversities and difference

positively contributes for development of adjustment capacity among students and ultimately they can get a social replica from the school settings (Fayaz, 2019; Luster & Durrett, 2003; peetsma et al., 2001). Though this educational design has multiple positive effects but it is not total barrier free. After UN convention on the rights of person with disability, it has been declared that disabled children have equal right to get education in inclusive education setting. In this regard, each country has their own framework and approaches to fulfil this ideal target by addressing their own contextual barrier and problems.

In India, not only there exists constitutional provisions for access of good quality education by disabled or differently abled students but also huge number policies have been initiated in this regard (IEDC-1974, NPE-1986, PIED-1987, RCI-1999, SSA-2001, RTE, 2009, RPWD-2016 & NEP-2020). Despite of constitutional provision and policy initiatives, the enrolment rate of disabled children in elementary education is very low and dropout rate is high in comparison to non-disabled children. Though 65.8 lakhs disabled children in the age group 5-19 are found in India but only 61% among them attends school; 27 % have never attended school and their school dropout rates is around 12 % (Census, 2011). It is found that though the number of disabled children increases but their enrolment percentage decrease. In 2013-14, the enrolment percentage of disabled children in inclusive education was 1.1%, which declined to 0.9% in the year 2018-19 (UDISE, 2018-19). This low enrolment and high dropout trend among disabled children shows that India is far away from achieving the agenda for inclusion of all children within 2030(MDG-2015). In this regard, numerous empirical findings have been reported on similar vein, i.e. low enrolment and high dropout rate of disable students in India, especially from rural area (Singh, 2016; Gosh, 2017; Kohama, 2012).

Why disabled students are not enrolling in inclusive schools or why there is less interest among parents of disabled children to send their children in inclusive schools is an interest area of both researchers and policy makers. This is a global issue. In this context, good number of researches have been undertaken globally to find out the causes for low enrolment and high drop out among disabled children. But two things motivated us for undertaking this work. Firstly, maximum studies have focused on Macro level or policy level problems like inappropriate policy , low funding, inappropriate inclusive educational designs, inappropriate monitoring system, lack of awareness among parents etc (Chadha, 2000 ; Singh & Agarwa, 2015; Tulli, 2002) But less findings are available on grass root level problem. Secondly, though grass root level problems have been focused and reported but due to their segregated way of reporting, conceptualising all the problems in single frameworks is a problematic for both researchers and policy framers. This paper aims at exploring problems of inclusive education associated with teachers, school, parents based on the available literature and synthesising the problems with respect to their nature.

Barriers for Inclusion of Disabled children in inclusive educational settings:

Before going to have a detailed idea about barriers or challenges of inclusive education in the context of inclusion of disabled children, it requires acquaintance with educational designs meant for them. Historically, educating disabled children was considered as conflict with law of nature, i.e. disability is due to their sin and they have to live miserably. The educational model for disabled children was commonly known as “Exclusion”. In the second phase, when their education became the focus of policy framers, the design was framed as segregation where it was proposed for educational arrangement of disabled children in special schools. Next model for education of disabled was integration or mainstreaming where the entire curricular arrangement or set was framed for non-disabled, only placing the disabled students in general classroom with special teacher. Now we are at the phase of inclusion, this model proposed that all students irrespective of their physiological and psychological disability will study in same classroom.

Researchers have been reported challenges and problems of inclusive education designs from multiple ways and contexts. Like level wise –macro, micro and meso level; source wise – teacher as source, parents as resource, child as resource and community as a source. These problems also can be discussed nature wise- challenges associated with inclusive educational setting are mainly psychological, curricular, social and infrastructural in nature.

Institution related challenges:

It is beyond criticism that Inclusive education model has multiple positive benefits on student’s inclusive development but at the same time, its implementation is not challenges free. Researchers have studied the implementation related challenges of inclusive design in general and inclusion of disabled children in particular from multiple ways, i.e. source of problem, nature of problem or challenges and level wise problems or barriers. From source of problem perspective, it has been reported that maximum challenges are institution centric. The sub points are:- inclusive and exclusive infrastructure, professional competencies of teacher, attitude of teachers towards inclusive design and disability, attitude of disabled parents towards inclusive design, attitude of non-disabled parents towards inclusive design and disabled students.

1.1. Inclusive and exclusive infrastructure:

Availability of inclusive infrastructures in school for disabled students reduces the burden of a general teacher and helps them to manage teaching-learning process effectively for both disabled and non-disabled students. Secondly, these infrastructures provide opportunities to access the education by disabled students in a different way, which is not a limitation for them. These may act as alternative instructional medium arrangement. For example, deaf students who have limitations in hearing can be taught by sign language and for blind, Braille can be an alternative arrangement. On the other hand non availability of these infrastructures in schools causes decrease in confidence level

of teachers to teach disabled students, problem in access of quality instruction in inclusive educational setting. Along with restrictive access of teaching learning due to Unavailability of inclusive infrastructures related with teaching learning, restrictions caused for these students due to unavailability of infrastructures like ramp, disable friendly toilet, and disable friendly architectural design of school building in school. Lack of these hampers their learning in classroom and their access in school. If a school does not have ramps, how the locomotors disabled person will enter the classroom. Inaccessible building & transport services for disabled denied their access to a school environment. This unavailability of inclusive infrastructure becomes the reason of negative attitude among teacher and parents of disabled. It also highlight another factor that teacher are also not trained to use various infrastructure it indicates, there is lack of trained human recourse in our country.

As per the social model for disability, persons or people are not disadvantaged or disable rather the environment makes them disable. The environment designed for normal students may not be beneficial for disabled students. Normal infrastructure meant for normal students, lack of disabled friendly toilet, no ramp in school, lack of assistive technologies in school etc can directly or indirectly exclude the disabled children from inclusive educational setting (Irerri, B.R. & et.al, 2020; Dash, N., 2009). These structural arrangements exclude them from teaching learning. On the other hand some infrastructures such as Braille for blind, hearing aid for hearing impaired, assistive technology for all type of disabled students, adaptive chair and table, disable friendly toilet, recourse room, resource teacher, ramp within school environment, wheelchair, inclusive classroom setting and barrier free school environment etc includes the disabled children in inclusive settings (Edyburn & et al 2017).

This perspective directly denotes unavailability of stimulating and appropriate infrastructure for disabled students in general school as per the requirement of disable students is one of the cause of drop out and non-enrolment or exclusion of disabled students from inclusive educational setting (Bruijn et al., 2012, pp.22-23; wapling and Downie, 2012 p.21). It has been consistently reported for not only lacking of these infrastructures but also quality of available resources is very low in schools from India with ideal target for inclusion is a most important factor for the education of disable children (Benson, 2020; Bhatnagar & Das, 2001). Further, 87 % of the teachers not have access to support service in the classroom (Kuyini and Desai 2013; Osiname, A. 2016; Bhatnagar, N. & Das, A. 2014; Benson, S.K.2020; Kumar, P. & Agrawal, N.2018) neither they have the competencies to use them. The reason for non-available of infrastructure is cost of assistive technology and infrastructure needed for disabled students and lack of funding from government. Due to expensive nature of these assistive infrastructural resources to support education of disabled children, the schools face problem to procure due to lack of financial support from the

government(Gronlund, 2010; Nugulube, J.Y, 2016; Tchintcharauli,T.& javakhishvili,N ,2017 Hoadjli,A.C& latrache ,K.2020).

1.2. Teacher's Professional competencies:

Teaching competency and classroom management competency among teachers to deal with disabled along with non-disable students in inclusive setting is vital; lack of which causes exclusion. Professional competencies within the teachers affect the inclusive design in two ways, firstly the teacher who have training and having professional competencies to deal with multiple disability and their diverse problem can teach both disabled and non-disabled within same classroom efficiently. Secondly, they feel confident and feel equipped with necessary skill and attitude for teaching both disabled and non-disable within same classroom (Bandura, 1977). Having competency and teaching skill for teaching both disabled and non disabled simultaneously leads to positive attitude among teachers for both inclusive design and disabled students. But, maximum schoolteachers have lack of professional training and competency to teach in inclusive design (Nimante.D & Tubele.S,2010). In a study conducted by Das, Kuyini and Desai (2013) have reported that nearly 70 % of the regular schoolteachers in Delhi, India have neither received any training for special education nor have any prior experience in teaching students with disabilities.

Researchers have pointed out that the untrained teachers perceived teaching children with variety degree of disability within same classroom as challenge, many teachers admit that because they are not trained they face problem while teaching children with disability with normal children(Hoadjli,A.C& latrache ,K.2020). Lack of training and lack of professional competencies in teacher's leads to exclusion of disable children from inclusive setting. Due to the lack of competencies in teacher, they were unable to respond to the diverse need of disabled students and perceive teaching both disabled and non-disabled in same classroom as burden. In this context of inclusive education, researchers have highlighted the importance of professional training at both pre-service and in-service level (persson, 2006; Sarao, T.2016; Das,A & kattumuri.R.; Kayabasi, Z.2020). The training and quality of teaching are positively correlated (Brady,K. & Woolfson,L.2008). present teacher training program include the special education in the syllabus so the teacher received training in their teacher training programme for inclusive educational design and the earlier teacher training programme does not have any syllabus for education of disable, teacher enrolled in the old teacher education programme may not received any training regarding special education . Therefore, the new appointed teachers have a positive attitude towards inclusive design then teacher enrolled in earlier teacher education programme (McGinty, J.M.2016; Kern, E.2006). Pre-service and in-service training programme to train teachers on teaching and dealing with different kind of disability in inclusive settings should be given importance (Kawai & siddiki 2020).

1.3. Teachers' attitude:

In research literature, it has been consistently reported that teacher' negative attitude is one of the reason for exclusion of disabled students, where as positive attitude of teacher is required for successful implementation of inclusive design. May be positive or negative, the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education design and disabled students is shaped by number of factors, like quality and quantity of institutional infrastructures, own professional training, perceived competency, personal and social attributes like gender, social values towards disability, personal level experience with disabled person, type and magnitude of disability among students etc. Primarily the factors like institutional resources and professional training and competency determines teacher's attitude towards Inclusive design, where as their personal and social attributes, experience and values determines attitude towards disabled students.

All ready, it has discussed above that deficit in institutional resources or infrastructures leads to negative attitude of teachers towards inclusive design. Similarly, lack training and competency to teach and deal with disabled students causes negative attitude towards inclusive design via-perceived low self-efficacy, burdensome, low confidence (Torombe, 2013; Boitumelo et .al, 2020).

1.3.1. Gender – Gender of teacher is a predictor for their attitude towards disability (Limaye.2016; Ahmmed et al.2012; Bhuyan, 2019; Sood & Anand,2011).Some researcher found perception towards disabled children varies due to Gender of teachers. Female teachers have more positive attitude and have a greater tolerance level for children with disabled in comparison to male teachers (Pappas &et.al2018;Gyimah,2006). Due to their gender based psychological construct female are soft hearted and emotional than male in general. Therefore, female have show more sympathetic, empathetic and positive attitude towards the disable children towards inclusive education (Kumar, 2016; Thomas,1985).where as various research reported that gender gender of teachers was unrelated to the attitudes towards inclusion(Chhabra & Srivastav,2010).

Personal or prior contact with disable children:

Previous teaching experience with disable children at pre-service or in-service training phase positively affect teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. Some research found that those teachers who have disabled person in their family or in personal relation with disable children tend to show positive attitude towards children with disability and towards inclusive design(Batsiou et al. 2008; Findler et al. 2007; Malinen et al. 2012; Tsakiridou and Polyzopoulou2014; Zoniou-Sideri and Vlachou 2006). Lack of which create negative and stereotypical view about disable children(Norman et al., 1998 ;Huang &Chen, 2017; Leatherman & Niemeye , 2007). Researchers also report that personal contact does not lead to positive attitude (avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Alghazo. et.al, 2003)

Type, Magnitude and severity of disability:

Research shows that the type of disability is an important factor that affects teachers' attitudes toward inclusion (De Boer et al. 2012; Hairy, et.al.2015 ;Salvita ,T.2019 Tasnuba ,T.& Tsovoka,D.2015). In the study of Avramidis and Kalyva (2007), teachers felt that only children with mild special educational needs could attend the general school (Khan et.al., 2017; Tune, 2013; Starczewska et.al. 2011). Teachers pointed out that they feel inadequate to teach children with brain damage, autism and sensory disorders Pappas &et.al.2018). Teachers tend to develop positive attitude with the inclusion of students with mobility impairments or visual impairments in the mainstream class, but they will not have the same point of view with the inclusion of students who shows extreme behaviour problems (Hodkinson 2006). Teachers were face challenges or perceived difficult in consideration to the inclusion of students with mental retardation than the inclusion of mobility-impaired Students or students with learning difficulties (Gebhardt et al. 2011; Kalita & Sharma, 2012).

Socio-cultural background:

larger social attitude about disable children and education of disable children influenced the attitude of teacher (Limaye, 2016; Benson, 2020). Socio-cultural background of teacher and their larger societal attitude shaped their attitude and personal beliefs. The positive views of society create acceptance for disabled students in teacher and negative view of society crate a apathetic attitudes towards disable students .This positive or negative attitude of society depends because of the awareness level of peoples towards inclusive design and disabled students (Cohen& matthew, d.1994).

Attitude of both disabled and non-disabled parents and inclusive education:

The exclusion and inclusion of disable children not only related with insufficient instructional recourses for disable and teachers' attitude and deficit in professional competencies in teachers but also related with the attitude of parents of disabled and parents of non-disabled .The positive or negative attitude of parents of both disabled and non-disabled depend upon multiple factor. Attitude of Parents of both disabled and non-disabled children affect the enrolment of disabled children into inclusive educational settings (UNESCO report, 2019).

It is found that the parents of disabled children have both positive and negative attitude. Positive attitude happens due to awareness level and socio-economic status along with infrastructural facility for the disabled. Educated parents perceived inclusive education as beneficial for their children on the other hand uneducated parents due to their lack of awareness about disability feels that school cannot justify the learning problem of disabled children. Along with this parental attitude towards inclusive educational design set by school personnel, frequent stereotype attitude among the school personnel creates a similar negative attitude among parents and they do not want to send their

children to inclusive school. If they enrolled, their children in inclusive setting in latter phase its results in dropout.

The parents of non-disabled also have positive or negative attitude for disabled children as well as inclusive educational design .The positive attitude found primarily among educated parents, who knows the value and importance of studying their children along with disabled They know that their children can learn good social skill and values like – cooperation , adjustment , sharing , caring and tolerance better in inclusive setting .where as negative attitude comes due to the fear that their children may not progress academically well due to the presence of disabled in the same classroom or the teacher will focus more on the disabled children and their children will be negative . Another factor was they think the extremely disabled children are a physical threat to their children as well as their children may learn the inappropriate behaviour from them.

Attitude among disabled parents towards inclusive education:

The parents of disable children's attitude are influenced by various factors that result in negative attitude towards inclusive education programme.

Lack of competent teacher:

Training and competency is the most essential for teacher in reference to teach the disabled especially in inclusive educational setting. Lack of competency in teachers develops a negative attitude among parents of disable towards inclusion of differently able child into normal school with inclusive settings (Jackson, 2017; Davidson & et al.2012). Its create a fear among them that the teacher cannot fulfil the educational need of their children (Desai, & Pradhan, 2016; sarao, 2016; Das, 2013; Sesay , 2018; Tabassum, et al., 2014).

Lack of support service:

lack of physical and technological resources in school results in negative attitude of parents towards inclusive design. Without proper infrastructural facility, the disable children cannot be taught and it indirectly excludes them from educational institution (Raghavan, 2014; Chan, 2016; Saikia, 2016; Jigyel et al ; Jackson , 2017).

Stereotype thinking of school staffs:

There is stereo type thinking within the parents of non-disabled, teachers and headmasters towards enrolling differently able child with non-disabled children in same classroom create hurdles in the path of successful inclusion(Mohanty, & Nanda, 2017; Limaye, 2016; Wong et al. 2015; Raghavan, 2014; sarao, 2016). Well documented in many research that parents of differently able child hesitated to send their child to general school with inclusive settings due to apathetic attitude of school personnel both the headmaster and the teacher (Walker ,T.J.2012). Many researcher found that, the parents of differently able children think that students are not been benefited through inclusion (Sessay, C. 2018), they prefer more to the special education service (camero, D.L. 2013;

Nawmanchi, A & Bhargava, S. (2011) then inclusion of differently able with non-disabled in same classroom. This stereotypical point of view and the apathetic attitude of teachers, peers and non-disabled parents create a sense of inferiority, lack of confidence and negative emotion that is why also parents of disabled do prefer special school over the regular school with inclusive settings (Leyser & Kirk, 2004; Gulzar & Qureshi, 2016). Another concern those parents with disabled children shows is large class size. Some parents stated that the teacher and school staffs are non-supportive and frustrating while interaction with parents of disabled (Staple & Dilibereto, 2010; Mackichan et al., 2013). Parents' own understanding and lack of awareness about their children's disability also create a negative attitude for their education (Ansuman & Singhal, 2004; Strong, 2018; Owusu et al., 2018).

Educational qualification and income of parents:

The parents of differently able children's perception vary due to their own educational qualification (Ahmed, et al., 2012), income and awareness about the inclusive educational design and about the nature of disability. The larger society's view on perception towards inclusion, little knowledge and understanding of disability by parents of their own child is an obstacle towards inclusion (Wong et al. 2015). One research found that parents with high income and high educational qualification tend to have more positive attitude towards inclusive education (Bang, M.Y & Kim, K.A. 2002; Leyser & Kirk, 2014). This indicates that the poor parents with disabled children face more problems and that shapes their attitude towards education of their own disabled children and about their education. Poverty and disability each being both a cause and consequences of each other, for parents with poverty and with disabled children face severe economic crisis and they cannot afford the education of their children it cost more expenses to them (Emmett & Alant, 2006; Nagata, 2007).

Attitude among Non-disabled parents:

Researcher found that some parents of non-disabled children are supportive of inclusion of disabled children in inclusive settings while some parents of non-disabled are non-supportive for inclusion of the disabled in mainstream education, because they consider the disabled children as a barrier in the academic progress of their child. Parents were concerned and stated that their children did not receive enough help from teacher in inclusive classroom (Laurel, Duhaney and Salenda, 2000; Green & Shinn, 1994). However, the researcher reported that the perception of non-disabled parents depend upon their educational qualification and awareness of inclusive design (Owusu, 2018; Paseka, & Schwab, 2019). Parents who are educated have less negative attitude towards inclusive design than parents having no education (Paseka & Schwab, 2019). Some parents of non-disabled support inclusive design models but with segregated classes for differently able children for academics (Bhargava & Narumanchi, 2011). Some researcher also found that classes with differently

able children contributed positively to the academic career of normal child. The parents of normal child who value the socialisation process have more positive views towards inclusive education design (Sharma & Tory). The parents of non-disable children not support the inclusion of severely impaired, behavioural, emotional and mentally retard children (Palmer et al., 2001; McCoy and Banks, 2012; Godwin, 2011; Rafferty & Griffin, 2005; Bagshaw. & Radford, 2012). They have fear that their children also learn that inappropriate behaviour or it may be harmful for their students academically as teachers are not competent to handle children with severe disability (Rafferty et al., 2001). Some parents also think that teacher cannot have a check on normal children academic progress because the disable children capture all the teachers' time and attention.

Perspectives of institution based exclusion of Disabled students:

Multivarious causes and factor are responsible for exclusion of disable students from inclusive education settings. As discussed above through intensive literature reviewed numbers of factor responsible for non-enrolment and dropout of disabled students. Such as social exclusion and practice, nature of disability, attitude of parents of disable children and parents of non-disable children, personality of teacher, inadequate inclusive infrastructure, society beliefs and tradition, financial and physical recourses, training level of teacher and level of education and income of parents. If we look at the level wise problems, At Macro level inappropriate policy frame work act as the primary negative contributor for education of disable children. If a nation does not have constitutional provision and policy for the disable, they are excluding them from their basic rights including the right to education. At Meso level or societal level, how the people value the education of disable or how they think about their existence, rights and growth have an influence on their exclusion and inclusion in society as well as in educational institution. Finally, the most important aspect is the institution-based level or at micro level, multiple causes are responsible for their exclusion. The researcher categorised the institutional and societal level challenges into two dimensions that is -structural barrier and psychological barrier.

Structural Barrier:

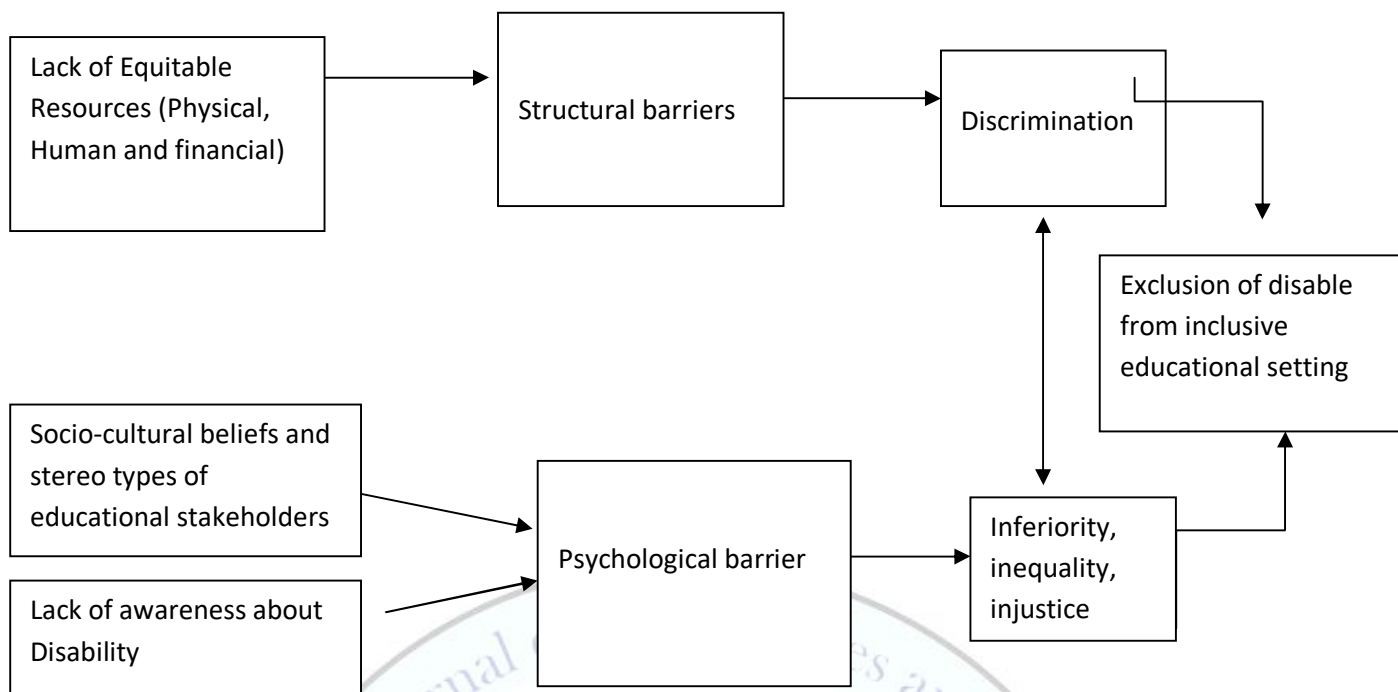
Structural barriers means the rigid and inaccessible physical environment, unavailable human recourses (incompetent teachers) and ineffective techno-pedagogical infrastructure, which compels the either to reject the inclusive education setting or face problem in access to inclusive educational setting. The disable students are not disable rather the environment makes them disabled (social model). So, lack of proper equitable environment like – Braille for the challenge of vision, the challenge of hearing can be solved by hearing aid, ramp make possible to access to the school for motor disable students. Therefore, in academic institution inappropriate recourses and infrastructure rejects the disable students. These inaccessible recourses are inappropriate physical environment of school for disabled, incompetent teachers for inclusive setting, unavailability of inclusive

infrastructure for disabled students and lack of financial resources. Lacking of these physical resources, infrastructural resources, human resources and financial resources leads to discrimination of disabled in inclusive education setting and finally leads to exclusion in the form of either non-enrolment and drop-out

Psychological Barrier:

Along with the structural barrier another aspect that is behavioural and psychological in nature act as a hindrance for education of disabled children. Every educational stakeholder is from larger society as results their values are being shaped by the larger society. Value the larger society have transmit to the individual stakeholders. These attitude and thinking teacher, headmaster, non-disabled's parents and peers carry forward to school from society. The negative values are that they are not born to be educated they are born to be dependent; disability is a curse. These negative values influence the academic atmosphere create injustice, inferiority and superiority complex among disabled and non-disabled and leads to discrimination. These negative value within the educational stakeholders create an attitudinal barrier that also results in non-enrolment and dropout of disabled children. There are various models to explain the relation of disability and discrimination that later leads to exclusion is the direct or indirect influence of the larger society's belief system. To explain this stance there are various model available in literature, one of the models that arise in contrast to medical model is social model that explain how disabled people exclude from society. Social model views disability as the result of the interaction between disabled people and an environment filled with physical, attitudinal and social barrier. This model explains why discrimination occurs in society. Similar to the social model the minority group model, a framework structured on the 'socio-political definition of disability' (Hahn, 1996), explain how the majority oppressed the minority, here the majority are non-disabled and the minority are disabled. This model assumes that majority have negative perception towards minority and discriminate them from mainstream that results in exclusion. From these two models, it was clear that there are two types of group one majority and one minority. The majority group of people characterized by the superiority, oppressive and rigid and tends to eliminate the minority by not providing them any chance to belong in the mainstream society. The same attitude the teacher and peers shows to the disable children that create a inferiority complex, lack of confidence, depressive thinking with in disable children that result in non-enrolment or drop out of disable children from inclusive educational setting leads to exclusion.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF EXCLUSION OF DISABLED STUDENTS IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



Conclusion:

In order to achieve the goal of Agenda-2030 we need proper constitutional and policy intervention to overcome the structural and psychological barriers. These barriers need to be addressed by policy framer, academicians and research scholar. Education is the basic right of every one including the disabled .No one should neither the constitution nor the stakeholders of society exclude them from their rights. Inclusive model will be a successful programme if these barriers can be minimized through proper constitutional policy, provision, and implementation in true sense. This paper will be helpful for the policy framer to know the grass root level challenges and addressed them accordingly that will lead us to our goal of including all.

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