

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A PARADIGM SHIFT FOR BUILDING VIKSIT BHARAT @2047

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I. Introduction

Towards the centennial of its independence in 2047, the Indian government has set a high objective of modernizing the country. The goal, commonly known as Viksit Bharat@2047, encompasses various dimensions of development such as economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, social advancement, and effective governance. The important incident that India is currently dealing with is highlighted in this vision. To actualize this vision, one needs a constant dedication, a strong belief in India's future, and a thorough awareness of the vast opportunities, abilities, and capacities of its people, especially the youth. Given their larger demographic share, India's youth could drive the country toward a recessive Bharat by 2047. Inclusive education, a ground-breaking approach that ensures everyone has access to high-quality education regardless of background, ability, or social or economic status, is a crucial part of this goal. Inclusive education is crucial to achieving Viksit Bharat's vision in every aspect. By 2047, inclusive education will be essential to creating an equitable and just Viksit Bharat. All students should have equitable access to high-quality education, regardless of their backgrounds or skills, thanks to inclusive education, a revolutionary concept. By accepting diversity, encouraging teamwork, and building nurturing learning environments, we can help every student reach their full potential and become engaged, productive members of society. Disability is a natural aspect of human beings. People with disabilities represent a significant portion of the population with unrealized potential. Currently, 16% of the world's population, or 1.3 billion individuals, are considered significantly disabled. According to the latest population census and the National Sample Survey Organisation's comprehensive disability surveys, the official estimates of disabled people in India are approximately 21 million (roughly around 2 percent of the population). Their inclusion in the workforce, education, culture, and politics leads to a more diverse, equitable, and productive society. It would recognize the value of individuals with disabilities as the nation's human resources and ensure that they receive equal opportunities, rights protection, and full participation in society. By empowering people with disabilities and ensuring their full participation, nations can unlock broader economic

growth, social cohesion, and sustainable development, and they would become active contributors. (**World Health Organisation**)

II. Inclusive Education

In the past, the public was frightened, afraid, and nervous about children with any unusuality. Throughout history, extraordinary people—whether gifted, artistic, mentally, physically, or sensory impaired—were forced to live in segregation. History demonstrates that these people were oppressed, bullied, and isolated. Many scientists, reformers, artists, and creatives were persecuted, excluded, and even executed by the public and government agencies who considered them as mental illness. Hospitals and residential facilities segregated mentally ill persons and considered physically disabled people sinners and untouchables. Over time, more people spoke up for disability education, reintegration, and rehabilitation in integrated or inclusive settings. To improve their welfare, we have accomplished three milestones: segregation, integration or mainstreaming, and inclusion.

Inclusion in education refers to including all students to equal access to equal opportunities of education and learning and is distinct from educational equality or educational equity. It arose in the context of special education with an individualised education program and is built on the notion that it is more effective for students with special needs to have the said mixed experience for them to be more successful in social interactions leading to further success in life.

The goal of inclusive education is to give all children a high-quality education by effectively meeting their different requirements in a way that is helpful, courteous, accommodating, and attentive to their demands. It entails putting students in the same learning setting who have different requirements, backgrounds, and talents.

All people with disabilities have the right to inclusive education, according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (**CRPD**). It is applicable to all children with disabilities, including "those who have physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that may prevent them from fully and equally participating in society over an extended period of time due to a combination of barriers." (**CRPD, Article 1**). Every child has the right to an education. This includes children with disabilities. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (**CRPD**) further emphasises the fundamental human right to inclusive education for every child with a disability. Inclusive education systems accommodate all students, regardless of their needs or talents, at all educational levels, including pre-school, primary, secondary, university, vocational, and lifelong learning.

Inclusive is a philosophy built on the belief that all people are equal and should be respected and valued, as an issue of basic human rights. It is an unending set of processes in which children and adults with disabilities have the opportunity to participate fully in all community activities offered to people who do not have disabilities (**UNESCO at the UN Committee of Rights of the Child-October 6, 1997 Centre for Human Rights. Geneva**).

"Inclusion has been defined as the acceptance of all pupils with the mainstream education system taught with a common framework, and identified as the responsibility of all teachers". (**Thomas, 1997**).

"Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions" (**Article 3, Salamanca Framework for Action**). Inclusive schools is that where all children should learn together, regardless of any difficulties or difference as they may have (**Salamanca Framework for Action, Article-7**).

World Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) proclaims that children have the right to life and the best possible change to develop fully (Article 6), and 'Disabled Children must be helped to be as independent as possible and be able to take full and active part in everyday life". (**Article 23**).

According to **Stainback and Stainback (1996)**, "An inclusive school is a place where everyone belongs, is accepted, supports and is supported by his or her peers and other members of the school community in the course of having his or her educational- needs met.

The following is the definition provided by the **Minister of Human Resource Development** in 2003: "Inclusive education means all learners, young people - with or without disabilities being able to learn together in ordinary pre-school provisions, schools, and community

It is clear from what has been said above that an inclusive school is one in which all students are welcome, regardless of their special needs, and where they are educated and given opportunities for empowerment. We are aware that inclusive education allows all students to receive an education through a shared approach regardless of their special education needs.

Inclusive education ensures that all students, regardless of their individual differences, have equal opportunities to access quality education, resources, and support services. It recognizes that all learners have unique needs and provides appropriate accommodations and modifications to ensure equitable access to learning.

Inclusive education embraces diversity, recognizing the richness that comes from students with different backgrounds, abilities, disabilities, learning styles, and perspectives. It promotes understanding and acceptance, fostering a culture of respect and inclusivity where all differences are valued.

Inclusive education promotes a sense of belonging for all students by creating, welcoming and supportive learning environments in which everyone feels valued, respected, and included. It encourages active participation and engagement in the learning process, ensuring that all students feel like integral members of the school community.

The concept of inclusive education is rapidly gaining global prominence as societies recognize the importance of providing equal educational opportunities for all. In India, this approach is not just an educational reform but a societal transformation necessary for building a truly developed nation by 2047. In India's pursuit of becoming a Viksit Bharat, inclusive education plays a crucial role in guaranteeing that no child falls behind and every individual is prepared to contribute to the nation's advancement.

With the goal of being a developed nation by 2047, the centenary of India's independence, comprehensive education will play an even more important role. This vision is about creating a country where all citizens, regardless of background, have the chance to fulfil their full potential; it is not just about economic progress or technological advancements. The cornerstone of this vision is inclusive education, which guarantees that every kid, regardless of their conditions or talents, receives a high-quality education that equips them to actively engage in society.

III.Paradigm Shift in Education

The traditional Indian educational system has long been known for its strict framework, which frequently gives students who meet prerequisites for language, social level, and cognitive abilities benefits. While this method may be helpful for a small percentage of students, it has unintentionally ignored a large number of others who do not fit these conventional societal norms. Consequently, the move to inclusive education signifies a fundamental break from this established model and a paradigm change in the direction of developing an educational system that is more equitable and responsive.

This paradigm shift demands a comprehensive reassessment of the entire educational ecosystem, not just a few concessions for students with exceptional needs. Every student has the right to learn alongside one another in a nurturing setting that recognizes their unique needs and capabilities, regardless of their backgrounds or skill levels.

Implementing inclusive education necessitates a strategic and coordinated effort across multiple levels of the educational system. Schools can foster an environment that values and supports every student by establishing strong policy frameworks, engaging the community, building the capacity of educators, integrating technology, and implementing strong

monitoring and evaluation systems. As India moves towards its vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047, these strategies will be essential in ensuring that inclusive education becomes a reality for all learners, contributing to the development of a more just, equitable, and prosperous nation. The following strategies are essential for the successful implementation of inclusive education, helping to create an environment where every student can thrive.

Teacher Training and Capacity Building

Teachers are at the forefront of implementing inclusive education and play a crucial part in the process of creating classes that are welcoming to students with disabilities. Students are able to be motivated, inspired, and involved by them. On the other hand, a significant number of educators do not possess the appropriate training to deal with the diversity of requirements that their students face. Consequently, training and professional development programs for teachers should to place a primary emphasis on inclusive instructional strategies. This includes training in inclusive pedagogical approaches, classroom management in a variety of settings, and differentiated education, among other things on the list. It is through good training that one can cultivate the mindset of "I will make a difference."

Curriculum and pedagogy

One of the most significant changes required is in the curriculum, teaching methods and assessment. Traditional curriculum frequently focuses on meeting the needs of mainstream pupils and have a limited scope. We must broaden and adapt the curriculum in an inclusive education system to meet the diverse needs of all students. This involves incorporating differentiated instruction strategies, where teachers can modify their teaching methods to suit various learning styles and abilities.

Infrastructure and Assistive Technology

For the purpose of inclusive education to be genuinely effective, schools need to be psychologically and physically ready to accommodate all of the students that are enrolled in them. In order to accommodate students who have impairments, it is necessary to ensure that school buildings are equipped with accessible facilities and amenities such as ramps, elevators, and other such amenities. Our recommendation is that classrooms be outfitted with instructional resources that are designed to accommodate a wide range of learners. This could include speech-to-text software, screen reader software, communication aids, and adaptive technology. Additionally, schools are required to build an inclusive culture that acknowledges the importance of diversity and cultivates a sense of support and respect for all children.

Policy and Governance

Effective implementation of inclusive education requires strong policy frameworks and governance structures that prioritize inclusivity across all tiers. We should implement policies that promote educational equity by providing more assistance to marginalised community schools.

Dara collection and Analysis

For success, full paradigm shift We regularly collect and analyse data on student outcomes, participation rates, access to resources, and other relevant indicators to assess the effectiveness of inclusive practices.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to ensure that inclusive education is genuinely effective, the government should implement ongoing monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that inclusive education practices are effective.

Accountability and Transparency

To ensure that inclusive education is genuinely effective, the government should continuously establish clear accountability mechanisms to ensure that all stakeholders are responsible for promoting inclusive education and meeting the needs of all learners.

Continuous Improvement

To ensure that inclusive education is genuinely effective, the government should continuously seek ways to improve inclusive practices based on data analysis, stakeholder feedback, and research findings.

Community Involvement

Community involvement is needed to accomplish inclusive education outside of school. Parent, community, and civil society organizations are crucial to inclusive education understanding and support. Regular communication, workshops, and collaborative decision-making should engage these stakeholders in schools. This promotes a shared understanding of inclusive education and its benefits for all students. Community involvement also addresses cultural and societal biases that may hamper inclusive practices.

IV.The Role of Inclusive Education in Viksit Bharat @2047

Inclusive education is a transformative approach that fosters an environment that not only accommodates but also celebrates diversity, empowering every learner to reach their full potential. In the context of Viksit Bharat @ 2047, India's vision of becoming a fully developed nation by its centennial of independence, inclusive education is a cornerstone that supports the nation's broader goals of social, economic, and cultural development.

To be successful in achieving India's goal of creating a Viksit Bharat by 2047, inclusive education is not only morally required but also strategically essential. Inclusive education builds the foundation for a prosperous, cohesive, and vibrant nation by promoting social equity, encouraging economic growth, and fostering national unity. It also strengthens national solidarity. By ensuring that every individual is prepared to both contribute to and benefit from their country's advancement, the fundamental principles and methods of inclusive education will play a crucial role in helping India achieve this ambitious objective.

Fostering Social Equity

One of the most profound impacts of inclusive education is its ability to foster social equity. Significant disparities, particularly in access to quality education, have historically marked Indian society. Caste, class, gender, and ability are often the lines that draw these disparities, continuing cycles of poverty and exclusion. Inclusive education directly challenges these inequities by ensuring that all children, regardless of their background, have access to the same educational opportunities. By levelling the playing field, inclusive education helps to bridge the gap between different socioeconomic groups, enabling children from disadvantaged backgrounds to climb the socioeconomic ladder. This, in turn, fosters a more equitable society by distributing opportunities more fairly and enabling social mobility for all.

Encouraging Economic Growth

A nation's ability to maintain a strong economy is heavily influenced by its population's levels of education. India's ambition to become a global economic powerhouse by 2047 depends on inclusive education. Having access to a good educational program raises the potential of developing a workforce that is both knowledgeable and skilled. Inclusive education never wastes ability, utilizing the abilities of all students, especially those who might otherwise be marginalized. Inclusive education helps to develop each individual's talents, making the workforce more adaptive and productive. As a result, this encourages creativity, increases output, and hastens economic advancement. An educated population will also be better prepared to contribute to a future knowledge-based economy, establishing India as a worldwide market leader.

Building National Unity

India's diversity is part of what makes it so strong, yet it has also caused conflict and division. Because it fosters an environment of mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation between students from all origins, inclusive education is essential in establishing national unity. Students that attend inclusive classrooms get an appreciation for and respect for differences in language, ability, culture, and religion. All citizens gain a sense of belonging as a result of this

early exposure to diversity because they understand that they are a member of a wider, inclusive community. It is possible to create a more cohesive society where people are bound together by mutual respect and shared ideals by implementing inclusive education from an early age.

V. Challenges in Achieving Inclusive Education

The implementation of inclusive education in India is not without its challenges, despite the fact that education that is inclusive has many benefits that are widely accepted. A lack of resources, attitudes held by society, defects in teacher preparation, Cultural and Social Barriers, Inadequate Teacher Training, Gaps in Policy Implementation and difficulties in enforcing policies are the foundations upon which these obstacles are built. It is absolutely necessary to find solutions to these problems in order to realize the goal of inclusive education and ensure that every child has the opportunity to learn and thrive in an atmosphere that is supportive.

Limitations on Resources

Lack of resources is one of the biggest obstacles to inclusive education implementation in India, especially in rural and impoverished areas. Basic infrastructure issues that many schools face include small classroom sizes, unhygienic conditions, and an absence of essential teaching materials. Due to these constraints, meeting the needs of all students, especially those with disabilities, is difficult. For instance, kids with physical disabilities may not be able to fully participate in school activities if there are no ramps, accessible facilities, or specialised learning aids available.

Cultural and Social Barriers

Cultural and social attitudes play a significant role in shaping the acceptance and implementation of inclusive education. In many parts of India, deep-rooted prejudices and misconceptions about disabilities and marginalised communities persist, leading to exclusion and discrimination. These societal attitudes can create significant barriers to inclusion, as families and communities may not see the value in educating children with disabilities or those from marginalised groups. This stigma can result in lower enrolment rates for these children, and even when they do attend school, they may face bullying, isolation, and a lack of support from peers and teachers.

Inadequate Teacher Training

Despite being the cornerstones of inclusive education, many teachers lack the necessary skills to address their pupils' wide range of needs. The options for teacher training and professional development are severely lacking, especially when it comes to inclusive pedagogy and classroom management. Many teacher preparation programs in India still prioritize

conventional approaches, which may not be effective in classrooms with a diverse student body. As a result, educators may lack the competence and self-assurance needed to apply inclusive methods in a way that sufficiently supports children with a variety of learning needs.

Gaps in Policy Implementation

Although India has made great progress in creating regulations that support inclusive education, there is still a large obstacle between the creation of policies and their actual implementation. Although a number of legislative and regulatory frameworks, like the Rights to Education Act and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, support inclusive education, these frameworks frequently fall short in practice, especially at the local level. Numerous causes, such as limited budget, poor coordination between different government departments, and insufficient oversight and enforcement procedures, can be blamed for this divergence. Policies are frequently applied haphazardly or gradually, which results in disparities in the way inclusive education is carried out in various locales and educational institutions.

VI. Conclusion

For India to realize its goal of creating a Viksit Bharat by 2047, inclusive education is not just morally required but also strategically important. India's goal of becoming a developed nation is based on the idea that every citizen should have access to high-quality education, regardless of their family's financial situation. Unlocking the full potential of India's enormous and diverse human resources is crucial for promoting the country's socioeconomic development and enhancing its social unity. This strategy not only caters to the educational needs of each individual, but also strives to establish a more equitable society that values diversity and empowers everyone to feel valued.

By investing in inclusive education, we can create a vibrant and equitable future for Viksit Bharat. This vision requires a collective effort from governments, educators, families, communities, and all stakeholders. Through continuous learning, adaptation, and collaboration, we can ensure that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential and contribute to the progress of our nation. By building a more inclusive and equitable education system, we can lay the foundation for a future where everyone can thrive and contribute to a better tomorrow.

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Important websites

<http://tbinternet.ohchr.org>

<http://worldofinclusion.com/resources/>

<http://www.csie.org.uk/resources/inclusion-index-explained.shtml>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inclusion_%28education%29