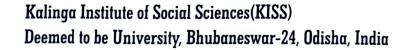


Proceedings of the International Virtual Conference on

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: NEED AND CHALLENGES

17th-18th December, 2021









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Inclusive Education in India: Issues and Challenges

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Abstract

The slogan of the millennium, "Education for All," emphasizes the provision of educational opportunities to all, including children with special needs. Inclusive education means the inclusion of all learners on the holistic platform instead of making any segregation or any type of isolation. It is a system in which all children in a given locality learn together in the same local school along with their peers in the same environment despite their strengths and weaknesses. Such type of education instills a sense of self-confidence and reduces otherness in children's minds with special needs. It is a practical solution to the segregation of children, as it emphasizes equal educational opportunities for all. Due to lack of a non-inclusive curriculum, unawareness, attitude, and sensitivity of parents and teachers, improper planning and execution of policies, we have not yet achieved success in inclusive education in India. Therefore it is the responsibility of everyone involved in a child's education, the parents, teachers, administrators, community, and government, to address the issues and meet the challenges for the success of inclusive education in our country.

Keywords: Inclusion, Inclusive Education, Issues, Challenges, Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education (IE) is an approach towards educating children with disability and learning difficulties with normal children. It is an effective way to promote an inclusive society as it addresses the learning needs of such children and seeks to maximize their potential. The 'Education for All' goals were set at Jometin World Conference (1990) in Thailand. It was affirmed that all children and youths and adults, are to avail of educational opportunities to fulfill their primary learning requirements. This provides more significant opportunities for all children to participate in various activities like social, cultural, recreational, art and music, games and sports, and extracurricular activities.

It is an approach for educating the learners with disabilities and learning difficulties with other normal children by bringing them into a mainstream classroom and community. They are to be included in a school where students of all ability levels are taught as equals. Teachers must adjust their curriculum and teaching methodologies so that all students benefit. It is a strategy of increasing the capacity of our education system to connect with all learners. It restructures policies and practices in educational institutions, thus addressing the problems of diversified students in a particular region. It is the most appropriate way to develop an inclusive and tolerant society. Inclusion ensures each child's fundamental right to learn as well as it accepts that each child is blessed with unique abilities; also it attempts to enhance the innate power of each learner. It focuses on the inclusion of children with special needs in public schools without creating any labeling, distinction, or differentiation. Special arrangements may be made for such learners to avail themselves proper scope and ample opportunity to learn with general learners without separating them into the borderline of special schools.

National Council of Educational Research and Training, together with the **United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund,** in 1987 in India, launched the Integrated Education for Disabled Children Project to strengthen the inclusion process of such deprived learners with learning difficulties in public educational institutions. In recent days inclusion, the concept has been widened and broadened to encompass deprived learners with deformities as well as students who belong to disadvantaged sections of society.

In 2010, 73 million of our children belong to primary school age in the country were not coming to school. In the 1990s, over 110 million out-of-school children, UNESCO Institute for Statistics mentions 82% of





Published by

Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) Deemed to be University,
Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India
www.university.kiss.ac.in & www.kiss.ac.in