



A Review on Emergence of Inclusive Education and its Reflection in National Education Policy, 2020

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Abstract: Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) clearly stated that everyone has the right to education at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. More than 40 years ago, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, asserted that “everyone has a right to education”. Despite notable efforts by countries around the globe to ensure the right to education for all, some realities are persist that more than 100 million children, including at least 60 million girls, have no access to primary schooling. More than 960 million adults, two-thirds of whom are women, are illiterate, and functional illiteracy is a significant problem in all countries, industrialized and developing. In viewing this scenario, world declaration for education for all 1990 was adopted with purpose of every person child, youth and adult shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs. In India, According to the report of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), 32 million Indian children of age up to 13 years have never attended any school, the majority of them belonging to the socially disadvantaged class (2014). According to 2011 census, 2.21% of Indian Population has one or other kind of disabilities. Out of 62.32 crore of male Indian citizen, there are 1.5 crore disabled male in India. Out of 58.76 crore female Indian citizens, there are 1.18 crore disabled female in India. In 2011, only 61% of the disabled children aged 5-19 years were attending educational institution. 12% had attended earlier and 27% never attended an education institution. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 adopted to envisage equitable and inclusive education for all, with special focus on children and youth, especially girls, from socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

1. INTRODUCTION

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it will be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitations of sovereignty. Every individual and every organ of society, teaching and education should be facilitated to promote respect for the rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of member states themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) clearly stated that 1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. 2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. 3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To ascertain world scenario regarding the movement of inclusive education.
2. To find out the emergence of inclusive education movement in India.
3. To work out the roadmap of inclusive education in India under National Education Policy, 2020.

3. EMERGENCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MOVEMENT IN THE WORLD

More than 40 years ago, the nations of the world, speaking through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, asserted that “everyone has a right to education”. Despite notable efforts by countries around the globe to ensure the right to education for all, some realities are persist that more than 100 million children, including at least 60 million girls, have no access to primary schooling. More than 960 million adults, two-thirds of whom are women, are illiterate, and functional illiteracy is a significant problem in all countries, industrialized and developing. More than one-third of the world’s adults have no access to the printed knowledge, new skills and technologies that could improve the quality of their lives and help them shape, and adapt to, social and cultural change. More than 100 million children and countless adults fail to complete basic education programmes; millions more satisfy the attendance requirements but do not acquire essential knowledge and skills.

At the same time, the world faces daunting problems: notably mounting debt burdens, the threat of economic stagnation and decline, rapid population growth, widening economic disparities among and within nations, war, occupation, civil strife, violent crime, the preventable deaths of millions of children and widespread environmental degradation. These problems constrain efforts to meet basic learning needs, while the lack of basic education among a significant proportion of the population prevents societies from addressing such problems with strength and purpose. These problems have led to major setbacks in basic education in the 1980s in many of the least developed countries. In some other countries, economic growth has been available to finance education expansion, but even so, many millions remain in poverty and unschooled or illiterate. In certain industrialized countries too, cutbacks in government expenditure over the 1980s have led to the deterioration of education. Yet the world is also at the threshold of a new century, with all its promise and possibilities. Today, there is genuine progress toward peaceful detente and greater cooperation among nations. Today, the essential rights and capacities of women are being realized. Today, there are many useful scientific and cultural developments. Today, the sheer quantity of information available in the world - much of it relevant to survival and basic well-being - is exponentially greater than that available only a few years ago, and the rate of its growth is accelerating. This includes information about obtaining more life-enhancing knowledge - or learning how to learn. A synergistic effect occurs when important information is coupled with another modern advance - our new capacity to communicate. These new forces, when combined with the cumulative experience of reform, innovation, research and the remarkable educational progress of many countries, make the goal of basic education for all - for the first time in history - an attainable goal. Therefore, we participants in the World Conference on Education for All, assembled in Jomtien, Thailand, from 5 to 9 March, 1990.

For the welfare of the disabled section of people, another convention was passed by the United Nation that United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006 comprising of 50 Articles. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (A/RES/61/106) was adopted on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and was opened for signature on 30 March 2007. There were 82 signatories to the Convention, 44 signatories to the Optional Protocol, and one ratification of the Convention. This is the highest number of signatories in history to a UN Convention on its opening day. It is the first comprehensive human rights treaty of the 21st century and is the first human rights convention to be open for signature by regional integration organizations. The Convention entered into force on 3 May 2008. The Convention follows decades of work by the United Nations to change attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities. It takes to a new height the movement from viewing persons with disabilities as “objects” of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as “subjects” with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free, and informed consent as well as being active members of society.

The Convention is intended as a human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension. It adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for persons with disabilities to effectively exercise their rights and areas where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced. The Convention was negotiated during eight sessions of an Ad Hoc Committee of the General Assembly from 2002 to 2006, making it the fastest negotiated human rights treaty. The purpose of the Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Recognition of inclusion as the key to achieving the right to education has strengthened over the past 30 years, and is enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (herein after: the Convention), the first legally binding instrument to contain a reference to the concept of quality inclusive education. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 also affirms inclusive quality and equitable education. Inclusive education is central to achieving high quality education for all learners, including those with disabilities, and for the development of inclusive, peaceful and fair societies. Furthermore, there is a powerful educational, social, and economic case to be made. The OHCHR Thematic Study of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to Education (2013) affirms that only inclusive education can provide both quality education and social development for persons with disabilities, and a guarantee of universality and non-discrimination in the right to education. However, despite progress achieved, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (herein after: the Committee) is concerned that profound challenges persist. Many millions of persons with disabilities continue to be denied a right to education, and for many more, education is available only in settings where they are isolated from their peers and receive an inferior quality of provision. Barriers that impede access to inclusive education for persons with disabilities can be attributed to multiple factors, including:

- a) The failure to understand or implement the human rights model of disability, in which barriers within the community and society, rather than personal impairments, exclude persons with disabilities;
- b) Persistent discrimination against persons with disabilities, compounded by the isolation of those still living in long-term residential institutions, and low expectations about those in mainstream settings, allowing prejudices and fear to escalate and remain unchallenged;
- c) Lack of knowledge about the nature and advantages of inclusive and quality education, and diversity, including regarding competitiveness, in learning for all; lack of outreach to all parents and lack of appropriate responses to support requirements, leading to misplaced fears, and stereotypes, that inclusion will cause a deterioration in the quality of education, or otherwise impact negatively on others;
- d) Lack of disaggregated data and research, necessary for accountability and program development, impeding the development of effective policies and interventions to promote inclusive and quality education;
- e) Lack of political will, technical knowledge, and capacity in implementing the right to inclusive education including insufficient education of all teaching staff;
- f) Inappropriate and inadequate funding mechanisms to provide incentives and reasonable accommodations for inclusion of students with disabilities, inter-ministerial coordination, support and sustainability;
- g) Lack of legal remedies and mechanisms to claim redress for violations.

States parties must have regarded for the underlying general principles of the Convention in All measures undertaken to implement inclusive education and must ensure that both the process and outcomes of developing an inclusive education system comply with article. The General Comment is applicable to all persons with actual or perceived disabilities. The Committee recognizes that some

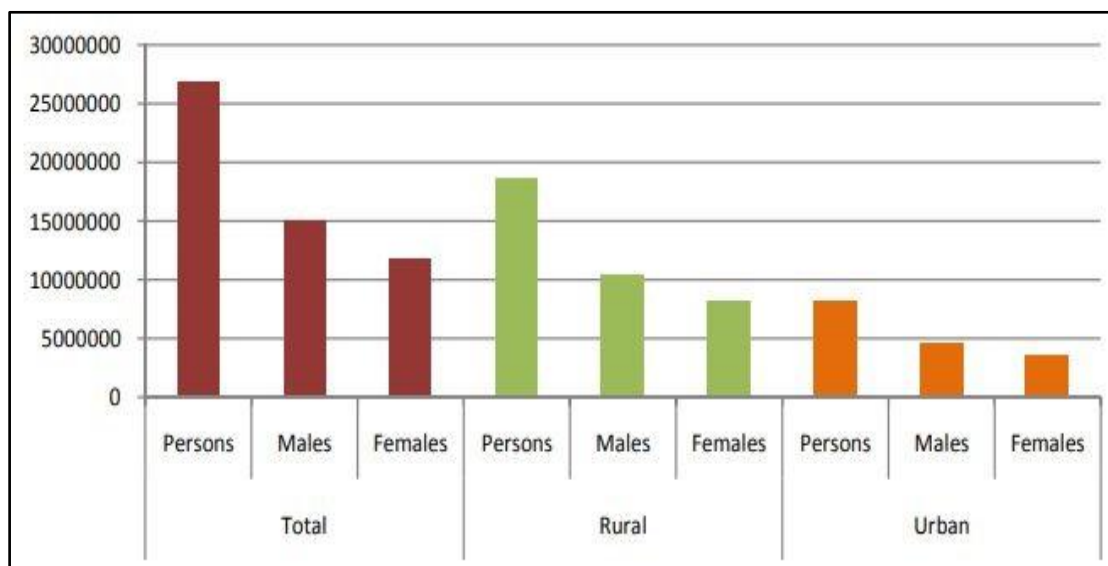
groups are more at risk of exclusion from education than others, such as: persons with intellectual disabilities or multiple disabilities, persons who are deafblind, persons with autism or persons with disabilities in humanitarian emergencies. Consistent with Article 4, paragraph 3, States parties must consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations (OPDs), in all aspects of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of inclusive education policies. Persons with disabilities and, when appropriate, their families, must be recognized as partners and not merely recipients of education.

4. PREVALENCE OF DISABLED POPULATION IN INDIA

According to census of India 2011, 2.21% of Indian population has one or the other kind of disability. This means 2.68 crore (26.8 million) people in India are disabled. Out of total 62.32 crore male Indian citizens, there are 1.5 crore (15 million) disabled males in India. Out of total 58.76 crore female Indian citizens, there are 1.18 crore (11.8 million) disabled females in India.

5. DISABLED POPULATION LIVING IN RURAL/URBAN AREAS

About 69% of the overall disabled Indian population lives rural areas. This tells us that 1.86 crore (18.6 million) disabled people live in rural areas. Only about 0.81 crore (8.1 million) disabled people live in urban areas.

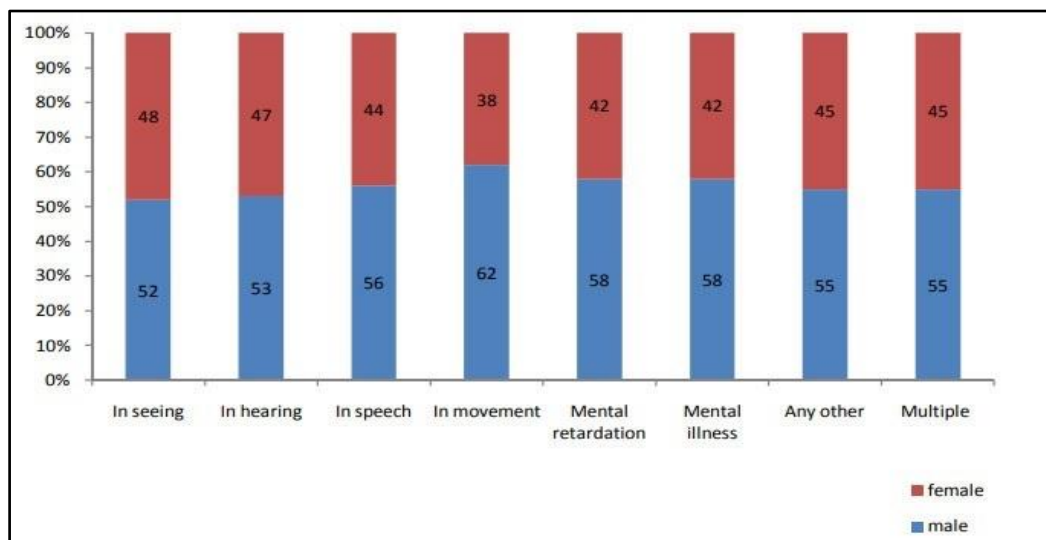


5.1. Disabled Population by Type of Disability

Following is the breakup of disabled Indian population by the type of disability. Please note that before RPWD Act 2016, only seven types of disabilities were recognized. Under RPWD Act 2016 a total of 21 types of disabilities, are recognized.

- 19% people have vision related disabilities
- Another 19% people have hearing related disabilities
- 7% people have speech impairment
- 20% people have locomotor disabilities
- 6% people are affected by mental retardation
- 3% people are suffering with mental illness
- 18% people have other types of disabilities
- 8% people have multiple disabilities

In all the above cases, males are more affected than females.

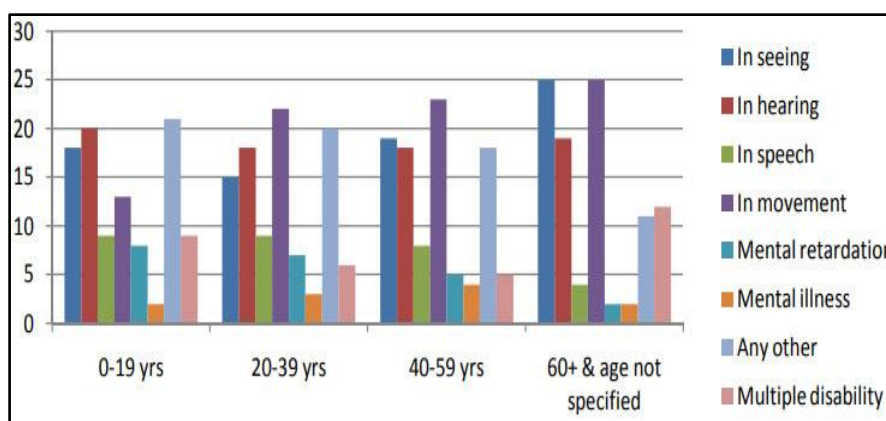


Disabled Type	Males	Females	Total
In Seeing	2639028	2394403	5033431
In Hearing	2678584	2394330	5072914
In Speech	1122987	875705	1998692
In Movement	3370501	2066325	5436826
Mental retardation	870898	635066	1505964
Mental Illness	415758	307122	722880
Multiple Disability	1162712	953986	2116698
Others	2728125	2199464	4927589

5.2. Disabled Population in India by Age Group

- 5% of all disabled people are in the age group of 0-4 years
- 7% disabled people are in the age group of 5-9 years
- 17% disabled people are in the age group of 10-19 years
- 16% disabled people are in the age group of 20-29 years
- 13% disabled people are in the age group of 30-39 years
- 12% disabled people are in the age group of 40-49 years
- 9% disabled people are in the age group of 50-59 years
- 10% disabled people are in the age group of 60-69 years
- 7% disabled people are in the age group of 70-79 years
- 3% disabled people are in the age group of 80-89 years
- 1% disabled people are in the age group of 90+ years (or age not specified)

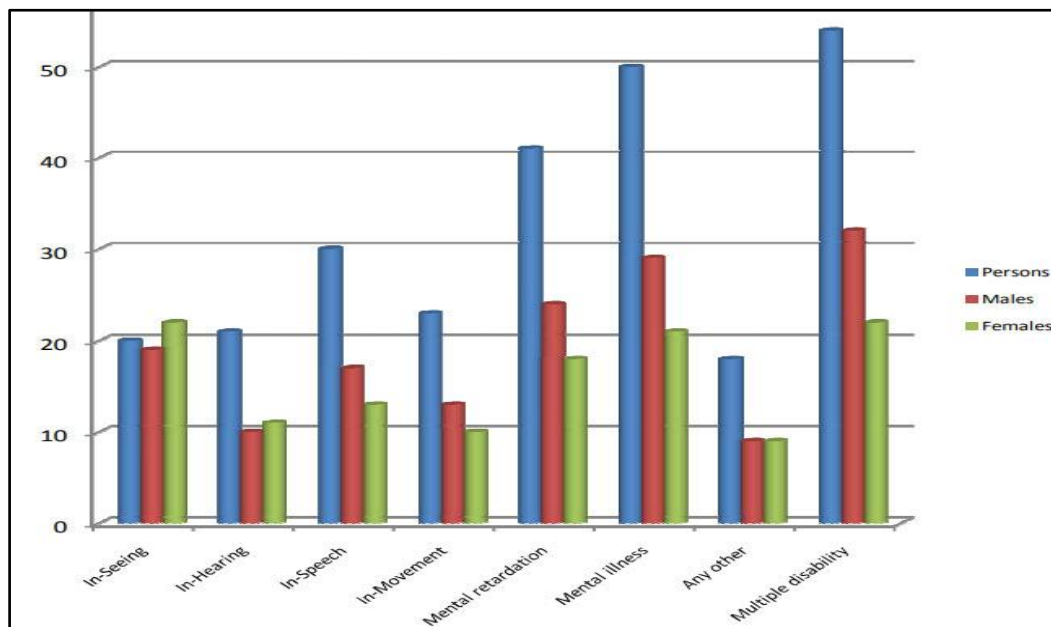
The percentage of disabled is highest in the age group 10-19 years followed by age group 20-29 years for both the male and female disabled persons. Among the disabled males, 18% are elderly (above 60 years of age) whereas 23% of female disabled are elderly.



5.3. Education in Indian Disabled Population

In 2011, only 61% of the disabled children aged 5-19 years were attending educational institution. 12% had attended earlier and 27% never attended an educational institution. In the age group of 5-19 years, only 43% of girls were attending school/college. Data shows that disabled children of 5-19 years age group, more children in rural areas never attended school or left education in midway.

The following chart shows percentages of male and females who **never attended educational institution** by the type of disability:



6. EMERGENCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MOVEMENT IN INDIA

The Integrated child development Scheme(ICDS) of 1974 was created by the ministry of Human Research Development, ICDS reached out to vulnerable populations of the population to provide service such as pre-five year old schooling and early intervention, including health care, nutrition and pre-school facilities. Since nothing was specified regarding the need of angalwadi workers, the social workers who implement this scheme on the ground, to specifically reach out and children with disabilities were not included in early intervention efforts, which would have then funneled them into mainstream schooling.

Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC): One of the major initiative from the government of India to promote “integrated education” is the programme of Integrated Education of Disabled Children(IECD). In 1974, the Ministry of Welfare, Central Government of India, initiated the IEDC programme to promote the integration of students with mild to moderate disabilities into the regular schools. The programme was designed to promote the retention of children with disabilities in the regular school system. The children were to be provided with financial support for books, stationary, school uniforms, transportation, special equipment and aids. The state government was provided with fifty percent of the financial assistance to implement this programme in the regular schools. Through this programme did not get much success. Reasons were (i) non availability of trained and experienced teachers.(ii) Lack of orientation among regular school staff about the problems of disabled children and educational needs and (iii) Non availability of equipment and educational materials. Another important reason for the failure of IEDC plan was the lack of coordination among the various departments to implement the scheme.

The National Policy on Education, 1986 and Programme of Action 1992: The National Policy on Education, 1986 and Programme of Action,1992 stressed the need for integrating children with special needs with other groups. According to NPE 1986, the objective to be achieved was to integrate the physically and mentally handicapped with general community as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence. The POA envisioned and expected that schools across India would accept responsibility by sharing resource e with other

institutions. However, rather than including or even integrating children with disabilities into their programmes, these schools would open resource centres for the under-privileged, providing children with learning disabilities resources after typical school hour but not during the normal school day.

Project for Integrated Education for Disabled, 1987: In 1987, the Ministry of Human Resource Development, in association with UNICEF and the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) developed a project called Project Integrated Education for the Disabled (PIED). The main aim of this project was to strengthen the IEDC plan (NCERT). Instead of confronting the programme to a particular institution or school, PIED adopted a 'Composite Area Approach' that converted all regular schools within a specified area, referred to as block, into integrated schools. These schools had to share resources like specialized equipment, instructional materials and special education teachers.

Persons with Disability Act (PWD) Act 1995: In 1996 the government of India enacted the Person with Disabilities Act (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) of India. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is the concern ministry to look after for the implementation of this Act. The Act provides for both preventive and promotional aspects of rehabilitation like education, employment and vocational training, reservation, research and manpower development, creation of barrier-free environment, rehabilitation of persons with disability, unemployment and establishment of homes for persons with disabilities. The PWD (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights, and Full Participations) Act, 1995 was enacted to give an effect to the "Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of the People with Disabilities in the Asian and Pacific Region." The Proclamation was issued in a meeting of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Region in December 1992 at Beijing, to launch the "Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons 1993–2002." The Act listed seven conditions of disabilities, which were blindness, low vision, leprosy cured, hearing impairment, locomotor disability, mental retardation, and mental illness. Mental retardation was defined as "a condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind of a person which is specially characterized by sub normality of intelligence." Mental illness was defined simply as "any mental disorder other than mental retardation." The Act adopted an approach of social welfare in respect of PWD and the main focus was on prevention and early detection of disabilities, education and employment of the PWD. The Act also provided 3% reservation in Government jobs and educational institutions. It stressed on making the barrier-free situations as a measure of nondiscrimination. Public building, rail compartments, buses, ships and air-crafts will be designed to give easy access to the disabled people. In all public places and in waiting rooms, the toilets shall be wheel chair accessible. Braille and sound symbols are also to be provided in all elevators (lifts). All the places of public utility shall be made barrier-free by providing the ramps.

The Rights of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2016: In the RPWD Act, 2016, the list has been expanded from 7 to 21 conditions and it now also includes cerebral palsy, dwarfism, muscular dystrophy, acid attack victims, hard of hearing, speech and language disability, specific learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, chronic neurological disorders such as multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease, blood disorders such as hemophilia, thalassemia, and sickle cell anemia, and multiple disabilities. The nomenclature mental retardation is replaced by intellectual disability which is defined as "a condition characterized by significant limitation both in intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem-solving) and in adaptive behavior which covers a range of every day social and practical skills including specific learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorders." The Act provides an elaborate definition of mental illness which is "a substantial disorder of thinking, mood, perception, orientation, or memory that grossly impairs judgment, behavior, and capacity to recognize reality or ability to meet the ordinary demands of life but does not include retardation which is a condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind of a person, especially characterized by sub normality of intelligence." Persons with benchmark disabilities are defined as those with at least 40% of any of the above disability. PWD having high support needs are those who are certified as such under section 58(2) of the Act.

The RPWD Act, 2016 provides that "the appropriate Government shall ensure that the PWD enjoy the right to equality, life with dignity, and respect for his or her own integrity equally with others." The Government is to take steps to utilize the capacity of the PWD by providing appropriate environment.

It is also stipulated in the section 3 that no PWD shall be discriminated on the ground of disability, unless it is shown that the impugned act or omission is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim and no person shall be deprived of his personal liberty only on the ground of disability. Living in the community for PWD is to be ensured and steps are to be taken by the Government to ensure reasonable accommodation for them. Special measures are to be taken to ensure women and children with disabilities enjoy rights equally with others. Measures are to be taken to protect the PWD from being subjected to cruelty, inhuman, and degrading treatments and from all forms of abuse, violence, and exploitation. For conducting any research, free and informed consent from the PWD as well as a prior permission from a Committee for Research on Disability to be constituted in the prescribed manner. Under section 7(2) of the Act, any person or registered organization, who or which has reason to believe that an act of abuse, violence, or exploitation has been, is being or likely to be committed against any PWD, may give information to the local Executive Magistrate who shall take immediate steps to stop or prevent its occurrence and pass appropriate order to protect the PWD. Police officers, who receive a complaint or otherwise come to know of violence, abuse, or exploitation, shall inform the aggrieved PWD of his right to approach the Executive Magistrate. The police officer shall also inform about particulars of nearest organization working for the rehabilitation of the PWD, right to free legal aid, and right to file complaint under the provisions of this Act or any other law dealing with such offence. Equal protection and safety in situations of risk, armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies, and natural disasters are to be provided to PWD. Children with disability are not to be separated from parents except on the order of a competent court and information about reproductive rights and family planning to the PWD is to be ensured. Accessibility in voting and access to justice without discrimination to the PWD are to be ensured. Public documents are to be made available in accessible formats.

It is to be ensured that all PWD enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life and has the right to equal recognition everywhere as any other person before the law and have the right, equally with others, to own and inherit movable and immovable property as well as control their financial affairs (Sec 13). It is also provided that a PWD with benchmark disability who consider himself to be in need of high support, he/she or any other person or organization in his behalf may apply to the authority appointed by the Government for the same and the authority shall take steps to provide support accordingly (Sec 38). However, the PWD would have the right to alter, modify, or dismantle the support system and in case of conflict of interest, the supporting person would withdraw from providing the support [sec 13(4&5)]. It has been provided in the section 14 of the Act that a District Court or any designated authority, as notified by the State Government, finds that a person with disability, who had been provided adequate and appropriate support but is unable to take legally binding decisions, may be provided further support of a limited guardian to take legally binding decisions on his behalf in consultation with such person, in such manner, as may be prescribed by the State Government. It is also provided that the District Court or the designated authority, as the case may be, may grant total support to the person with disability requiring such support or where the limited guardianship is to be granted repeatedly. In these cases the decision regarding the support to be provided shall be reviewed by the Court or the designated authority, as the case may be, to determine the nature and manner of support to be provided. Limited guardianship has been explained to mean a system of joint decision which operates on mutual understanding and trust between the guardian and the person with disability, which shall be limited to a specific period and for specific decision and situation and shall operate in accordance to the will of the person with disability. It is also provided that on and from commencement of the Act, every guardian appointed under any other law for time being in force shall be deemed to function as a limited guardian.

The Bill provides for the access to inclusive education, vocational training, and self-employment of disabled persons without discrimination and buildings, campuses, and various facilities are to be made accessible to the PWD and their special needs are to be addressed. Necessary schemes and programs to safeguard and promote the PWD for living in the community are to be launched by the Government. Appropriate healthcare measures, insurance schemes, and rehabilitation programs for the PWD are also to be undertaken by the Government. Cultural life, recreation, and sporting activities are also to be taken care of. All Government institutions of higher education and those getting aid from the Government are required to reserve at least 5% of seats for persons with benchmark disabilities. Four percent reservation for persons with benchmark disabilities is to be

provided in posts of all Government establishments with differential quotas for different forms of disabilities. Incentives to employer in private sector are to be given who provide 5% reservation for persons with benchmark disability. Special employment exchanges for the PWD are to be set up. Awareness and sensitization programs are to be conducted and promoted regarding the PWD. Standards of accessibility in physical environment, different modes of transports, public building and areas are to be laid down which are to be observed mandatorily and a 5-year time limit is provided to make existing public building accessible. Access to information and communication technology is to be ensured. The Central and State Advisory Boards on disability are to be constituted to perform various functions assigned under the Act. District level Committees are also to be constituted by the State Government. Chief Commissioner and two Commissioners for PWD are to be appointed by the Central Government at the central level for the purposes of the Act. Similarly, State Commissioners for PWD are to be appointed by the State Governments. National Funds for PWD and State Funds for PWD are to be constituted at the central and state levels respectively by the appropriate Governments. Contraventions of the provisions of the Act have been made punishable by a fine of an amount up to ten thousand for first contravention and fifty thousand extendable up to five lakhs for subsequent contraventions. Atrocities on PWD have been made punishable with imprisonment of 6 months extendable to 5 years and with fine. Fraudulently availing of the benefits meant for PWD has also been made punishable.

7. NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 AND ITS INCLUSIVE POLICY

The purpose of The New Education Policy (2020) is a framework to guide the development of education in the country. According to the Government, the NEP 2020 is formulated after having considered over 2 lakh suggestions from different levels of local self-bodies, 2.5 lakh gram panchayats, 6,600 blocks, 6,000 ULBs and 676 districts with the aim of holistic productivity and contributing citizens for building an equitable, inclusive, and plural society with an increased Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of 50% by 2035. After Independence Indian Education System goes through various changes, in order to make it accessible to the masses. Numerous commissions, policies and various reservations worked out pretty well for the paradigm shift from focusing solely on the 3R to providing quality education to the masses. Education is a fundamental right of every Indian citizen. All children in the age group of 6-14 years irrespective of any diversity are ensuring to access free and compulsory education by the RTE act 2009. The definition of inclusive education is given by UNESCO's Section for Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 2000) as, "Inclusive education is concerned with removing all barriers to learning, and with the participation of all learners vulnerable to exclusion and marginalization. It is a strategic approach designed to facilitate learning success for all children. It addresses the common goals of decreasing and overcoming all exclusion from the human right to education, at least at the elementary level, and enhancing access, participation and learning success in quality basic education for all." Inclusive Education refers to an educational practice, wherein child with disabilities will be fully included in the mainstream classroom with same age peers in the local school. This also emphasized that the child with disability must be exposed to all the curricular and co-curricular activities in order to ensure his full participation in the educational process. In the year 2015, India adopted the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. The goal 4 of SDG mentioned to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" by 2030 (NEP, 2020).

7.1. Equity and Inclusion

The aim of equity and inclusion is now at the heart of new NEP. In the fields of higher or school education, inclusion involves restructuring the whole system with the aim of ensuring the wide range of educational opportunities; this includes curriculum, pedagogy and recreational opportunities, etc. The policy is designed to avoid segregation and isolation of ethnic and linguistic minorities, those with disabilities and also those who face learning difficulties due to language barriers and are at the risk of educational exclusion. We make sense of the world through language and this creates and recreates power, authority and also legitimation. NEP 2020 has set the goal for all to be authoritative with the command of different languages at different levels of education. An attempt has been made to develop conscious awareness of roles and duties and inclusion of community participation which would minimize the exclusion of students on the basis of language and disability. This will motivate students to learn more about the diverse culture of India, its knowledge system and tradition and also to sensitize them on human values, empathy, tolerance, human rights, gender equality, inclusion, and equity which will develop respect for diversity.

Beyond all, equal respect for all religions with the idea to develop or bring back creative human endeavor, required for the 21st-century education system, has been the main focus of NEP 2020.

7.2. Gender Equality and Inclusion

NEP aims to ensure equity and inclusion in and through education by addressing all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparity, vulnerability and inequality in education access, participation, retention and completion and in learning outcomes.

Gender equality and inclusion are vital in achieving these aims and leaving no one behind. Education needs a greater focus on accessibility, equity and quality. Remarkable signs of progress have been noticed in the past few years in respect of female participation up to secondary level. Such progress could be because of Government's policies and programmes run for girl child-like "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao", "Sukanya and Balika Samridhi Yojana" and many more.

But girls' enrolment is lower than that of boys at upper secondary education. Gross Education Ratio during 2015-2016 stands only 23.4% against 25.4% for boys in higher education and the gap is visible at all the social categories.

Now, NEP's biggest effort is to bring gender sensitivity as an integral part of curriculum and gender inclusion fund to be raised upto class 12 which covers all the socio-economically disadvantaged groups and also the transgenders.

The condition of the primary education at government schools, the dropout rates of girls has put the country on the back foot in education. But the new NEP has given more focus to school learning with a new way of coping multi-disciplinary programs and focuses on the 21st-century skills in teaching, learning and assessment.

Alternative and innovative education centres will lead to multiple pathways of effective learning and widespread participation of students of different groups.

7.3. Inclusion of New Pedagogical System for Early Child Care Education

Early Child Care Education (ECCE) is not available to most young children, particularly children from economically disadvantaged families. Almost 85% of a child's cumulative brain development and growth occurs prior to the age of 6. Inclusion of this system will help children of early age to attain optimal outcomes in the domains of physical and motor development, cognitive development, socio-emotional-ethical development, cultural/artistic development, and the development of communication and early language, literacy, and numeracy. The division of Pedagogical system has been done with an intension to include the children of early education with the age group 3-5 into Formal education and also to include this stage of education into the school curriculum as per Global standard which was not done earlier. The method to include the coding system in early education is to compete with the developed countries and including mother tongue as a medium of Instruction at early stage of education will give advantage to understand them better as it is done in Europe. The flashy story books with pictures and signs, toys and activity based learning of the private nursery and LKG classes always excluded the poor family who could not afford all this but now new pedagogical and curriculum structure of schools education has been developed with flexible, multi-level, play-based, activity based and inquiry based learning for all.

8. CONCLUSION

As the cornerstone of all educational decisions, the ray of hope has come through the new National Education Policy, 2020, which talks about sustainable human development and universal education learning with equity and learning outcomes with research oriented mindset. India has always placed education at the centre of its development agenda and with bridging the gender, social, regional gaps with community participation it will raise the spirits towards equal opportunities to all ensuring equity in this policy. It is going to be the beautiful blend of both ancient and modern knowledge system which not only inculcate to acquire knowledge but also helps in integrating Indian culture and ethos. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisages equitable and inclusive education for all, with special focus on children and youth, especially girls, from socially and economically disadvantaged groups. It encourages and promotes "Barrier-free access to Education for all Children with Disabilities for full participation in the society without any fear.

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Citation: Dr. Mayanglambam Prakash Singh. "A Review on Emergence of Inclusive Education and its Reflection in National Education Policy, 2020" *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*, vol 10, no. 6, 2023, pp. 30-40. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.1006004>.

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