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## **Importance of Primary Education for Special Need Children in Inclusive System**

Krishna Kumar Pathak\* and Shiv Kumar

Department of Education Gurughasidas Central University, Bilaspur,C.G., India

\*Corresponding author: Krishna Kumar Pathak

### **Abstract**

According to new education policy “Right of education(2009)” is provide a golden opportunity of special need children. Inclusive system of a country is development, the benefits of which percolate to every citizen. This is a vast field of action embracing all activities of the nation. Needless to say, education is one of these activities. The paper has focused on primary education as an area of attention in inclusive growth while taking a bird’s eye view of certain aspects of secondary and higher education also. The eleventh five year plan regarding education has been briefly mentioned, with emphasis on elementary education and certain steps with a view of creating a genuine interest for learning per se, which would be sustained throughout life have been reviewed. Note has been taken of some reasons for deprivation from education and an attempt has been made to suggest some remedies. It has been emphasized that conditions should be conducive for making education a non stoppable continuum and to widen the area of coverage of education in all segments of society and all levels.

**Keywords:** Inclusive Education, Deaf, Blind, Physically & Mentally challenged, focus on Education in the Eleventh Plan.

### **Introduction**

Inclusive system implies growth in all aspects, embracing all segments of the population .The deprived in particular. Obviously, an important aspect of inclusive system would be to raise the literacy of the country, making education itself “inclusive” so as to involve everybody. The scope of inclusive system in education is so vast that generous coverage of all aspects become out of scope of this paper. While taking a bird’s eye view of the entire scenario of education, some aspects pertinent to inclusive system will be discussed. At this stage laudable attempts, on the part of the government, such as fundamental right to education, increase in educational institutions both at primary and higher levels, eleventh five year plan, and twelfth five year plan, suitable modifications in curriculum etc. may be mentioned. The primary purpose of this paper is to deal with inclusive education. It goes without saying that no education can be inclusive unless a basic primary education is not only within reach but also availed of by everyone.

The eleventh five year plan (2007-2012) presents a comprehensive strategy for strengthening the education sector covering all segments of the education pyramid. In the words of PM, Dr. Manmohan Singh, “Given the focus on education in the Eleventh plan, I have no hesitation in calling this plan a National Education Plan.”

Special features of the plan encompass the following:-

- 1- A massive thrust on access to education in the Eleventh Plan.
- 2- Doubling of funds in the eleventh plan increasing budgetary support and there by recognizing the role of the education sector.

- 3- Expanding access to secondary education in the Plan.
- 4- In higher education, increasing enrolment rates from 11 to 21 per cent over a ten year period.
- 5- Competitive world class institutions of higher learning.
- 6- Generating high quality manpower skills in meeting the demands of our going economy.
- 7- Encouraging private sector in augmenting the government's efforts both in higher education and skill development.
- 8- Setting up a national Commission on Education for deliberating on the emerging perspective on education in the changing global context.

At this stage it may be re emphasized that no person is denied education, if there is to be an inclusive system of the nation. The first and most important step is access to primary education. The trust of this paper will be on primary education, while not belittling the role of secondary and higher education. no special child of our country should ideally be deprived of primary education.

Deprivation in the context of education and special education would broadly mean denial to the student, adequate opportunity to enjoy the process of education per se, while also deriving benefits from it. Needless to say that the primary purpose of education is to inculcate in the special child a true understanding and genuine quest of knowledge and to see that this is sustained throughout life. There are several reasons why this is not always possible and these may be said to constitute the many facets of deprivation .If these facets are given due attention the dropout rates at primary level will diminish dramatically. It is out of scope of this paper to deal with all aspects of deprivation; nevertheless for purpose of convenience deprivation has been grouped in following categories:

- Children
- Those in deaf and visual challenged
- Those in the physically & mentally challenge
- **CHILDREN:**

Deprivation has many faces: the child who grows up in a home which is culturally & educationally unstimulating is handicapped by environmental deprivation; the child who is unloved and rejected by his parents suffers emotional deprivation, and the child who lives in residential care, for long period, or permanently is deprived of normal family life. There are other kinds of deprivation which affect education. Poverty is one of the greatest concerns of governments and international organizations. Absolute poverty is a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to social to social services. Income is important but access to public goods-safe water supply, roads healthcare, education-is of equal or greater importance, particularly in developing countries.

Socio economic circumstances in childhood which result in low qualifications in adulthood help transmit poverty across generations. A primary cause of child poverty is lack of opportunities among parents with low skills and low qualifications. Such parents are less likely to work and if they do work they are more likely to have low earnings. The task of balancing the economic demands of raising a family and the need to find time to devote to children is much harder for people in low-paid jobs with limited power to negotiate working arrangements. Where parents have to make a choice between low income and long hours, it is difficult to give children opportunity of a good life.

### **Those in deaf and visual challenged**

Research has shown that someone who has grown up in poverty is disadvantaged into deaf and visually challenged. This is to a large extent because people from disadvantaged homes are less likely to get good education qualifications. Economic compulsions force persons to give up the education after the primary level depriving them of all opportunities to complete their desired pursuits in higher education.

### **Those in the physically & mentally challenged**

Those would include locomotors impaired, M.R. and mentally disabled, severely handicapped. It is of paramount importance to realize that the designing of our educational system require special focus at the primary level. Those who have passed primary and secondary levels of education and acquired higher education either do not belong to the category of the deprived or else have overcome these drawbacks, aided or unaided.

To quote Amartya Sen, “While India has a highly developed –if overextended higher education sector (sending nearly six time as many people to the universities a China does, compared with its population),it remains one of the most backward countries in the world in terms of elementary education.” These remarks of Amartya Sen compel us to take a closer look at the Eleventh and twelve five year plan and its implementation with special reference to primary education.

### **Eleventh and Twelve five year plan-Goal, Targets, strategies in inclusive education**

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan-In developing countries, repetition of grade levels and dropout rates take their toll, with frequently less than half of a student cohort completing primary education. These the serve as powerful course of deprivation. In India 7.1 million children being out of school and over 50% dropping out at inclusive elementary and elementary level are matter of serious concern. SSA would therefore, the reoriented to meet the challenges of equity, retention and high-quality education. It is necessary to consider passing appropriate legislation for this purpose. SSA would be restructured into a national mission for quality elementary education to ensure minimum norms and standard for schools. It would address access, quality and equity and equity holistically through a systems approach.

**New schools:** Opening of new schools of about 20000 new primary schools and up gradation of about 70000 primary schools are required.

**Quality education:** unless there is a strong effort to address the systemic issues of regular functioning of schools, teacher attendance and competence, accountability of educational administrators, pragmatic teacher transfer and promotion policies, effective decentralization of school management and transfer of powers to Panchayati raj institutions (PRIs),it would be difficult to build upon the gains of SSA. It is essential to focus on good quality education of common standards, pedagogy and syllabi to ensure minimum learning levels.

**Public and private partnership:** Public and private partnership need not necessarily mean only seeking private investments to supplement governmental efforts, but also encouraging innovation in education that the government schools may lack.

**National commission on education:** setting up of National commission on education for deliberating on the emerging perspectives on education in the changing global context is required.

**Use of IT:** IT could provide new directions in pedagogical practices and students achievement. The idea is not merely making children computer literate but also initiating web based learning through modern software facilities.

Some salient target for elementary education in 11<sup>th</sup> plan focus on universal enrolment of 6-14 age group children including the hart to reach segment; restructuring and improving and improving the quality and standards of SSA with a clear goal of providing a quality of education equivalent to that of Kendriya Vidyalayas under the CBSE pattern; all gender, social and regional gaps in enrolments to be eliminated by 2012-13;drop out at primary level to be eliminated and the dropout rate at the elementary level to be reduced from over 50% to 20% by 2013-2013; all state/UTs to adopt NCERT quality monitoring Tools, improved quality to be defined in operational terms through clearly identified outcome indicators, viz., learning levels of student , teacher competence classroom processes, teaching learning materials etc. The curriculum will be revised as per the National Curriculum framework (2005)

and the NCRT guidelines. The financial burden for this purpose is shared by center and state governments in ratios defined from time to time.

The eleventh plan lays special focus on disadvantaged groups and educational backward area. The focus will include not only higher resource allocation but also capacity building for preparation and implementation of strategies based on identified needs, more intensive monitoring and supervision, and tracking of progress. Specific measures lay stress on:

- Top priority in preprimary schooling to habilitations of marginalized sections.
- Focus on improving the learning levels of SC, ST, and minority children through remedial coaching in schools and also in habilitation through educated youth of Nehru Yuva Kendra, NSS, self-help group and local non-governmental organizations.
- Special school for migrating children in 35 cities with million plus population.
- Special intervention for migrating children, deprived children in urban slum areas, single parents' children, physically challenged children and working children.

Regarding pre-primary education, SSA will have a component of one pre-primary, which can be universalized to cover 2.5 crore children in a phased manner. This is critical for school readiness/entry with increased basic vocabulary and conceptual abilities that help school retention. Beside it will free the girl child of sibling care. The Mid Day Meal scheme to be extended over a wide area with due consideration given to civic quality & safety.

### **Implementation**

Central questions concerning the role of education in opening up opportunities to everyone revolve around who has access to what levels and types of education, what is learned and how the post-school outcome of education affect occupational attainment, income social status and even power.

We must make education a means for reducing disparities of every kind, particularly economic and social. Principles of access and equity should be built into the policies and procedure for admission, or we can hold out opportunities for the hitherto excluded. Primary education has been declared to be a Fundamental right and must be implemented in all earnestness. Greater emphasis should be given to non formal education as well.

We have to create in the younger generation a desire to work together with tolerance and empathy and to learn to live with differences. In the work of Malcolm Forbes, "education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one." they must be exposed to different ideas and viewpoints, cultures, languages and traditions. This is called "celebrating differences by breaking down barriers" or the opening the doors of, or seeking out, diversities. There is need to bring the concept of good citizenship and values into the curriculum through appropriate role models, anecdotes, stories, visits, dialogue and discussion of happening in and around society. Current concerns such as democracy, citizenship, and participation, our heritage appreciation of arts and humanities and exposure to science for everyday living so as to promote the chances for students to become more balanced –must be appropriately woven into the education of every individual. For this we must use non formal education as much as possible, including "countrywide" classrooms to enable "education without walls" or "education for all" and Life Long education.

A special mention is made of the hearing, visually, physically and mentally challenged. There is a need to make such people self-dependent so that they may not be a burden on society –to adjust themselves in school, family and other social attainments so that they may be able to solve their day to day problem. This calls for trained teacher with specialized skills. The concept of inclusive education has emerged which argues that all children irrespective of the nature and degree of disability should be educated in general schools with normal children. Inclusive education

is all about making classrooms responsive to the need of the learner. It stresses on child centered pedagogy using peer tutoring, co-operative learning and group learning.

The thrust approach should be to create in the child from the very early stages of primary education, a thirst for knowledge which is sustained throughout life. This is the first step towards inclusive education and if successfully taken the benefits will percolate beyond primary education to secondary and higher education. Some such efforts have been mentioned in the paper.

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