

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY IN HIMACHAL PRADESH AND MIZORAM

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ABSTRACT:

Inclusive education is a new approach towards educating the Children with Disability taking into consideration their special needs and learning styles as per the recommendations of the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016. This paper is focused on the inclusive education for Children with Disability in Himachal Pradesh and Mizoram. Students in an inclusive classroom are generally placed with their chronological age-mates, regardless of whether the students are working above or below the typical academic level for their age. Also, to encourage a sense of belonging, emphasis is placed on the value of friendships. It is found in the study that about one percent of the total enrolled students in Himachal Pradesh and country and 3% in Mizoram involved in the inclusive community and the remaining are out of reach till now. The study is conducted in one and half years during academic sessions 2014-15 and 2015-16. The data was collected from websites of NEUPA. It is found that three fourth Children with Disability in Himachal Pradesh and 55% in Mizoram and India belong to elementary level only. Merely about 17% Children with Disability in Himachal Pradesh and 9% in the country and 11% in Mizoram study in secondary classes but, at the higher education only about 7% in Himachal, 1.5% in Mizoram and 2% in the nation is getting education. This is the matter of concern for the State and Central Governments. The percentage of schools exclusive for Children with Disability is very few and can be counted on fingers in the States and the nation. The author tried to describe the status of enrolment of Children with Disability in the State and the nation at all levels of education; i.e. Children with Disability enrolment in the total enrolment and enrolment in all educational level within Children with Disability enrolment including the percentage of schools exclusive for this group. At the end the major recommendations of the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016 are discussed keeping in view the education of the Children with Disability in both of the States.

Key words: *Inclusive education, Children with Disability, Enrolment, Session.*

INTRODUCTION:

Children are excluded from the schools around the globe on the grounds of disability, caste, race, sex, language, religion and property. But, education is the fundamental right of every child. The purpose of education is to ensure that all students gain access to knowledge, skills, and information that will prepare them to contribute to India's communities and workplaces in new era. The central purpose becomes more challenging as schools accommodate students with increasingly diverse backgrounds and abilities. As we strive to meet these challenges, the involvement and cooperation of educators, parents, and community leaders is vital for the creation of better and more inclusive schools. Inclusion is an educational approach and philosophy that provides all students with community membership and greater opportunities for academic and social achievement resulting in the formation of inclusive society. Inclusion is about making sure that each and every student feels welcome and that their unique needs and learning styles are attended to and valued.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY IN EDUCATION:

Inclusive education belongs to learning of diverse students side by side in the same classroom. They enjoy their learning by doing various activities together. Under the inclusion model, students with special needs spend most or all of their time with non-disabled students (Allen, K. E. and Schwartz, I., 2000). Inclusive education differs from previously held notions of integration and mainstreaming, which tended to be concerned principally with disability and 'special educational needs' and implied learners changing or becoming 'ready for' or deserving of accommodation by the mainstream. By contrast, inclusion is about the child's right to participate and the school's duty to accept the child. The Ministry of Welfare created the Integrated Education of Disabled Children Scheme (IEDC) in 1974. The program provided children with disabilities "financial support for books, school uniforms, transportation, special equipment and aids," with the intention of using these aids to include children in mainstream classrooms. However, the government of India realized that providing structural changes to the classroom, such as adapted equipment, would not be enough to integrate children with disabilities into the classroom. Although it was encouraged and partly funded by UNICEF, fifty percent of the funding was supposed to go through the state governments. This program stressed that students with mild to moderate disabilities needed to be integrated, but not moderate to severe. Therefore, it was not fully inclusive, and created tensions between mainstream and segregated special education schools. Tapasak, Renee and Christine, Walther-Thomas (1999) described that inclusion rejects the use of special schools or classrooms to separate students with disabilities from students without disabilities. A premium is placed upon full participation by students with disabilities and upon respect for their social, civil, and educational rights. Inclusion gives students with disabilities skill they can use in

and out of the classroom. Fully inclusive schools, which are rare, no longer distinguish between ‘general education’ and ‘special education’ programs; instead, the school is restructured so that all students learn together (Scheyer *et al.*, 1996). Possibly one of the most important pieces of legislation to date in India regarding people with disabilities is the 1995 People with Disabilities Act (PWD). The PWD Act covered a wide range of disability-related topics, from education to jobs to building design. Despite the wide range of topics covered, the PWD Act defines disability quite narrowly, listing only seven categories of disability: blindness, low vision, leprosy cured, hearing impairment, locomotor disability and mental illness. The Chapter V of the PWD Act focuses on the people with disabilities and education.

Inclusive Education, as defined and described by education experts, is a philosophy. It is not a program, nor does it happen in isolation. It can’t happen in one classroom and not the other. The successful inclusion of Children with Disability requires the shared value system, resources and collaboration of the state/province, school district, home, school and classroom. Because the nature of inclusion requires so many components to its implementation and success, it is often discussed by breaking it down into its topics and sub-topics. For example, we talk about co-teaching, differentiated learning, home-school communication, and IEPs. It is easy for people who are familiar with inclusion to know how all these pieces fit together to form an inclusive environment (Eredics, Nicole, 2012). IE does not mean that there will be large numbers of disabled children in every class; the beauty of IE is its flexibility. Increased awareness of the relevance of IE to all marginalised groups, for example, linguistic minorities, nomadic peoples, people with leprosy, TB or HIV status. There is ongoing and increasing need for useful resource materials and training courses on inclusive education and related issues, such as Child to Child. The need to publicize and disseminate already existing useful documentation such as the Salamanca Framework for Action, Education For All and legislation on the rights of the child. These documents are needed by practitioners for the lobbying of policy makers. This need for information further highlights the role of the Enabling Education Network (EENET) as an information sharing network which promotes IE in countries with limited access to basic information and/or material resources (IDDC, 1998).

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES:

Tapalla, P. (2012) studied integration and inclusion and found it as attempt to prove to the community that, including students with special needs in the regular classroom along with normal students does not affect the learning of the other students. It gives them a boasting to enrich their learning experiences and helps to sensitize the normal students to help their peers with disabilities to grow and get proper place in the educational system. Strogilos, V.; Lacey, P.; Xanthacou, Y.; and Kaila, M. (2011) studied two different models of service integration

providing different opportunities for the inclusion of pupils with multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). In the first model school was working with outside services and services were within the school in the second model. It was found in the study that service integration and collaboration were more effective in schools in which teachers, health and social professionals were working under the same management. The researchers suggested the expansion of second model of multidisciplinary collaboration with the integration in the schools of health therapists, educational psychologists and social workers. Kohama, A. (2012) studied inclusive education in India and found that various policies have been framed since independence for inclusion of children for special education at all levels. But, the implementation efforts have not resulted to reach the goal 'education for all' across the country. The researcher recommended the country to bridge the gaps in education of disables to build a strong system of inclusive education in India. Kumar, Sanjeev (2015) conducted study on inclusive education in Himachal Pradesh and found that visually impaired and hearing impaired children enrolled in Shimla district from the year 2008 to 2010-11. The enrolment of Learning disabled children was highest in Mandi district but it was found that all disabled children were found decreased year by year. Problems like 'no involvement of the parents', teachers' negative attitude towards teaching CWSN in classes', 'rigid curriculum', no follow up by the teachers and higher authorities' were problems highlighted in the study. Khan, S. H. (2012) found that including children with disabilities in education is a challenging task and needs a stricter government control, policies, legislative framework, mass community mobilization and involvement and above all provision of appropriate responses to wide spectrum of learning needs of special children in both formal and non formal settings. Kumar, S. (2017) conducted a study on status of education for CWSN in making inclusive society in Himachal Pradesh and found that three fourth inclusive society in Himachal Pradesh and 90% in India belongs to elementary level only. Merely about 17% inclusive society in the State and 9% in the country study in secondary classes. 7% in Himachal is getting higher education. It is concluded from the literature that out of small number of studies conducted in this burning area are not concerned with the status of education for Children with Disability in Himachal Pradesh and Mizoram. Therefore, there is dire need to study this area with special reference to status of enrolment of Children with Disability in Himachal Pradesh and Mizoram.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- 1) To compare the enrolment of Children with Disability in Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and India in 2014-15 and 2015-16.
- 2) To study and compare level – wise enrolment of Children with Disability in their total enrolment Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and India in 2015-16.

- 3) To study and compare percentage schools exclusive for Children with Disability in 2014 – 15 and 2015 – 16 in Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and India.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS:

Inclusive Education: It refers to the education of the Children with Disability in which they spent most of their time with non – disabled students. The students get education their education in normal regular classrooms.

Children with Disability: It means the children with certain disabilities like visual impairment, blindness, orthopedically handicapped and mentally retarded, etc.

Enrolment: The students admitted to academic classes from class 1st to 12th in academic session.

Session: The session belongs to activities conducted in one year which begins in April and ends in March.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Type of Study: Community based analytic study.

Duration of Study: One and half Year, 01/04/2014 to 30/09/2015.

Methodology: The descriptive survey method was used in conducting the present study.

Data Collection: The secondary data available in web portal of National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NEUPA), New Delhi and department of education of Himachal Pradesh Govt. is used in the study. The study is based on the data of the year 2014-15 and 2015- 16.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

The data collected from the websites is tabulated and interpreted followed by discussion:

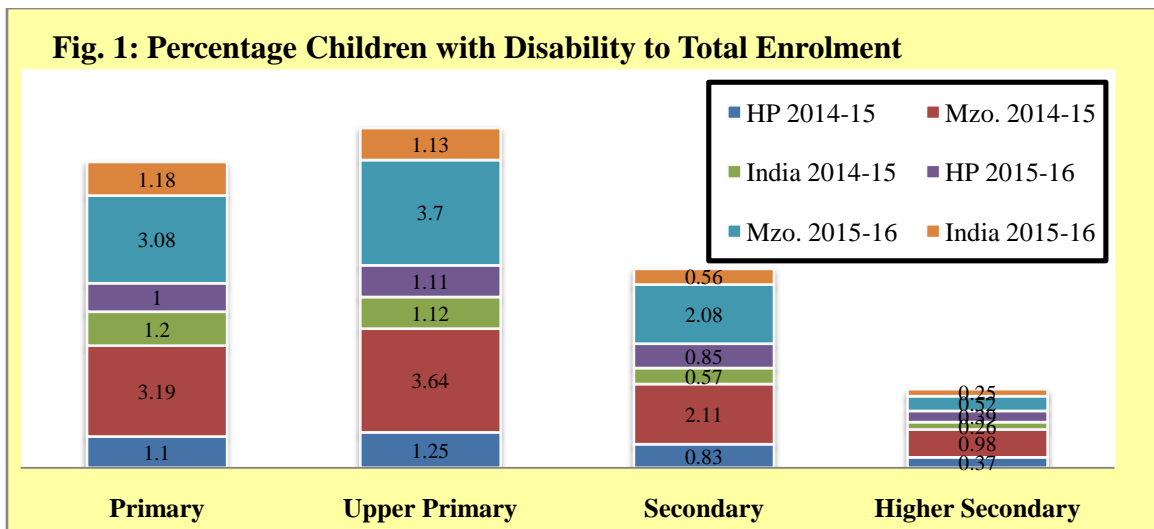
- 1. Comparison of Enrolment of Percentage of Children with Disability to Total Enrolment:** It deals with the enrolment percentage of Children with Disability to the total enrolment in the States Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and the country. It is described in the Table I as follows.

Table I: Comparison of Enrolment Percentage of Children with Disability to Total Enrolment in Himachal, Mizoram & India

Level	2014-15			2015-16		
	Himachal	Mizoram	India	Himachal	Mizoram	India
Primary	1.10	3.19	1.20	1.00	3.08	1.18
Upper Primary	1.25	3.64	1.12	1.11	3.70	1.13
Secondary	0.83	2.11	0.57	0.85	2.08	0.56
Higher Secondary	0.37	0.98	0.26	0.39	0.52	0.25

NEUPA (2016). School Education in India. Flash Statistics, U-Dise 2015-16, Table No. 3.10, Page No. 44

Table I shows the comparison of percentage of Children with Disability to the total enrolment in 2014-15 and 2015-16 in Himachal, Mizoram and India. It is clear that the Himachal is lagging behind Mizoram and India in the enrolment of Children with Disability at Primary level in both the sessions; i.e. (1.10<1.20<3.19 in 2014-15 and 1.00 < 1.18 < 3.08 in 2015-16). But, in Upper Primary level Mizoram led Himachal and the country in 2014-15 (3.64>1.25>1.12) and increased by 0.06, but Himachal come down by 0.14% in 2015-16 (3.70>1.13>1.11). It is also noteworthy and clear from Fig. 1 that the enrolment in Mizoram is much high in Secondary and Higher Secondary levels than Himachal Pradesh in both the sessions. It is noteworthy that Mizoram is leading Himachal and the country in respect of enrolment of Children with Disability at Primary, Upper Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary levels in both of the sessions.



2. **Level – wise enrolment of Children with Disability in their Total Enrolment in 2015-16:** The level – wise enrolment of Children with Disability in their total enrolment is described followed by the class wise enrolment in Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and India in the session 2015-16.

Table II: Class – wise Enrolment of Children with Disability

Level	Grade	2015-16		
		Himachal	Mizoram	India
Primary	I	929	824	248016
	II	958	956	279422
	III	1153	948	321832
	IV	1256	868	342196
	V	1500	878	328250
Upper Primary	VI	1313	947	266865
	VII	1438	860	263382
	VIII	1346	749	235568
Secondary	IX	1229	402	122228
	X	938	460	96227
Higher Secondary	XI	478	60	31044
	XII	397	60	29825
Total		12935	8012	2564855

NEUPA (2016). School Education in India. Flash Statistics, U-Dise 2015-16, Table No. 3.11, Page No. 45

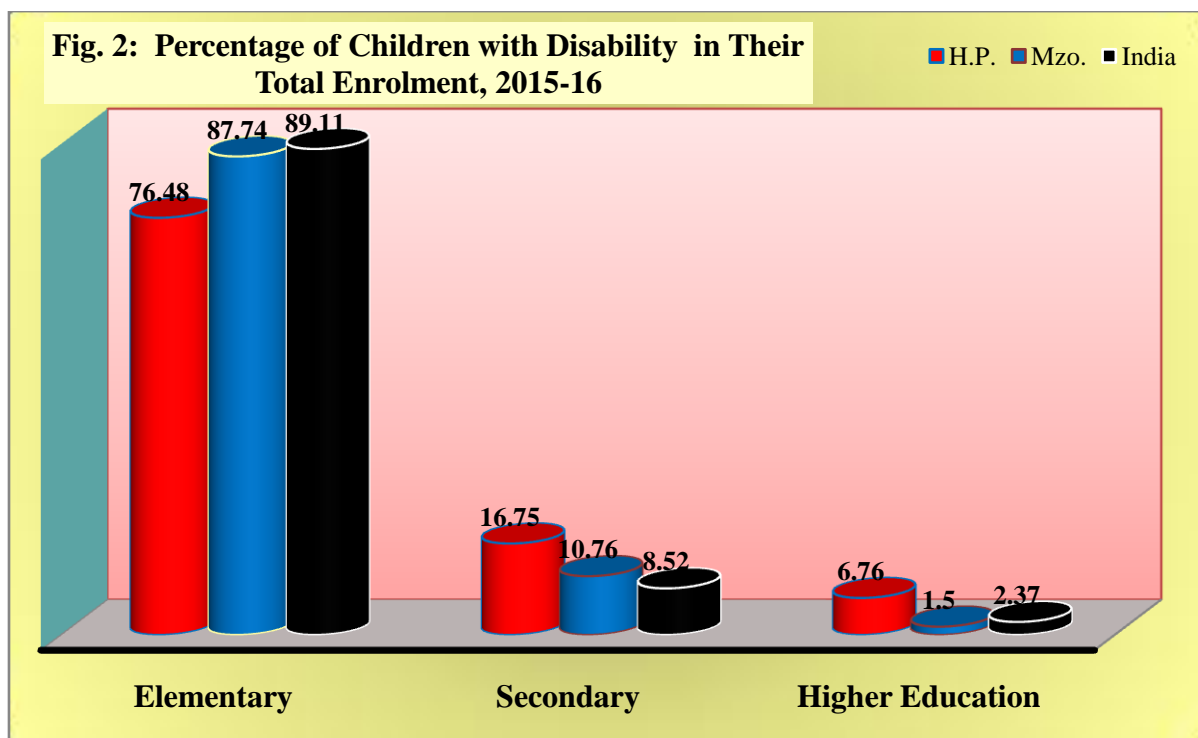
Table II deals with the class – wise enrolment of Children with Disability in Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and India in the academic session 2015 – 16. It is clear that the enrolment of Children with Disability in Primary classes is higher and decreasing at the higher classes and in Secondary and Higher Secondary levels it is lowest and it is the point of concern for the higher authorities. The level – wise comparison of Children with Disability within their total enrolment is discussed with the help of Table III and Fig. 2 as follows.

Table III: Level – wise Comparison of Children with Disability within their Total Enrolment

Level	Himachal	Mizoram	India
Elementary	76.48	87.74	89.11
Secondary	16.75	10.76	8.52
Higher Education	6.76	1.50	2.37

NEUPA (2016). School Education in India, Flash Statistics, U-Dise 2015-16, Table No. 3.11, Page No. 45.

Level – wise comparison of enrolment of Children with Disability within their total enrolment is described in the Table III. It is found that enrolment of Children with Disability within their total enrolment is highest at Elementary level in Himachal, Mizoram and India. But, this status is highest in Mizoram followed by the country with 89.11% in Himachal 76.48 %. 16.75% Children with Disability enrolled at the Secondary level in Himachal as compared to 10.76% in Mizoram and only 8.52% in India. It means students are more aware in Himachal Pradesh towards their education than in Mizoram and the whole country. But, at the higher education students’ enrolment is found lowest with 6.76% in Himachal, Mizoram 1.50% and 2.37% in India. Himachal is leading Mizoram with a difference 5.26% and the country with a difference of 4.39 % in the enrolment of Children with Disability in higher education level in the year 2015-16 as shown in Fig. 2.



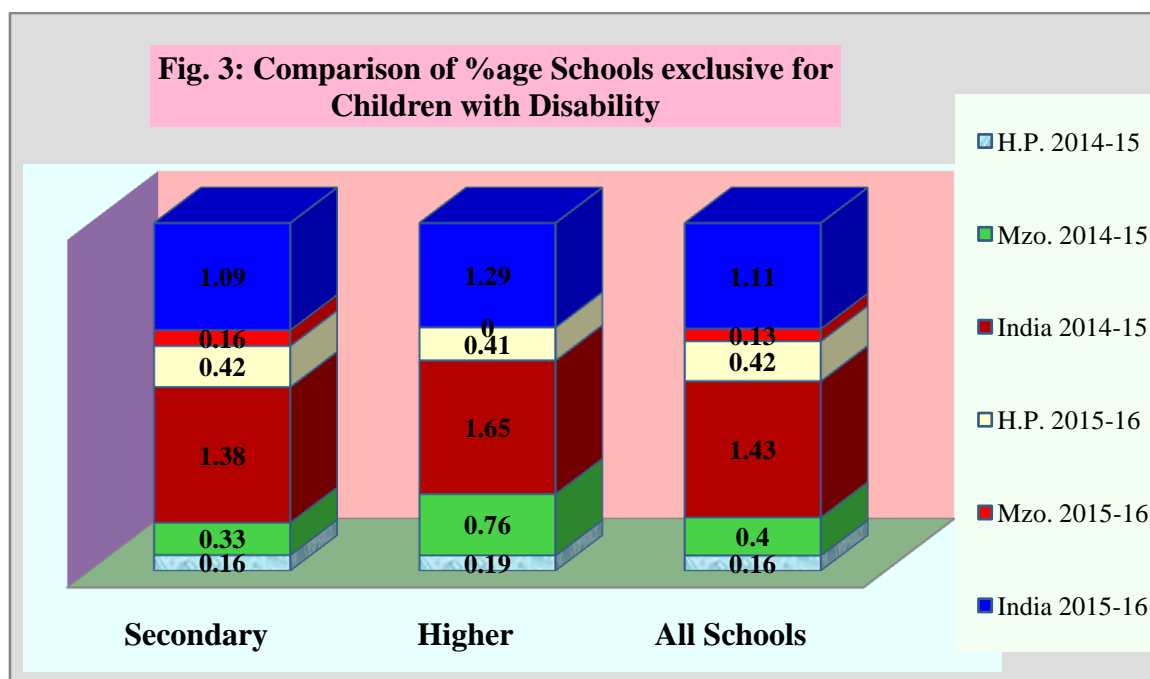
3. Comparison of Percentage Schools Exclusive for Children with Disability: There are schools established for the education of Children with Disability for making them empowered in concerned areas in the Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and India. This is only for education of these children which is for making the inclusive society.

Table IV: Comparison of Percentage Schools Exclusive for Children with Disability

Level	2014-15			2015-16		
	Himachal	Mizoram	India	Himachal	Mizoram	India
Secondary	0.16	0.33	1.38	0.42	0.16	1.09
Higher Secondary	0.19	0.76	1.65	0.41	0.00	1.29
All Schools	0.16	0.40	1.43	0.42	0.13	1.11

NEUPA (2016) Secondary Education Flash Statistics (2015-16), Page No. 7.

Comparison of percentage schools exclusive for Children with Disability is shown in the Table IV. It is clear that Himachal Pradesh is quite behind Mizoram and the nation at all levels in 2014-15 regarding the percentage schools exclusive for Children with Disability. But, in the session 2015-16, Himachal is quit above Mizoram and below than the nation. It is notable that percentage of schools for all levels exclusive for Children with Disability increased in Himachal but, it is decreased in Mizoram and the country in the session 2015-16 up to 30th September, 2015 as shown in Fig. 3.



There were 15,068 CWSN were identified in Himachal Pradesh suffering from one or other disability. Out of which 13,191 have been integrated in formal schools and for 1,877 different strategies have been adopted to bring them into the fold of education system. For this children Home-Based Programme has been introduced and implemented at elementary level in the age group of 6-14 years in Himachal Pradesh. 520 children have been

adopted by 23 NGOs in different districts and remaining is being covered by in-service trained teachers. 12,352 Individual Education Programme (IEP) have been prepared for every child under HBE and accordingly goals were fixed for every three months. For mild and moderate categories, functional academic curriculum has been implemented in the first been organized and 1,639 aids and appliances were provided to the needy children (Kumar, S., 2015).

On the other side, Mizoram has very few schools for the children with disability like Himachal Pradesh at elementary, secondary and senior secondary stages of education. Under Inclusive Education of SSA, Children with Disability are identified and taken care of in normal schools. Children with Disability friendly provisions have been made in schools so as to make schools barrier free for them. Besides these, there are special schools meant for children with disabilities of severe nature. As per Census 2011, there are 15160 persons with disabilities in Mizoram, out of which 8627 live in rural villages while the other 6533 live in towns. Out of 15160, 1976 are orthopedically handicapped (locomotor); 1585 are mentally retarded; 2035 visually impaired; 3354 hearing impaired and 1050 suffering from mental illness. So far, Disability Certificate has been given to 8362 (Chuaungo, L. 2014).

CONCLUSION:

In the inclusive education system everyone has the equal right to learn. It is believed that everyone can learn and need to get access to learning opportunities in the peer group. In the end it can be said that in order to achieve inclusiveness among all the communities in the various developmental pursuits of the country, a holistic approach of understanding the multiple disadvantages faced by the Children with Disability is necessary. As well as all the developmental activities such as education, adult education, health, food and employment should be interlinked and have a combined influence on the communities as a whole. About one percent of the total enrolled students in the State and country involved in the inclusive community and the remaining are out of reach till now. Three fourth inclusive society in Himachal Pradesh and 90% in Mizoram and India belongs to elementary level only. Mere about 17% Children with Disability in Himachal Pradesh, 7% in Mizoram and 9% in the country study in secondary classes but, at the higher education only about 7% in Himachal 3% in Mizoram and 2% in the nation is getting education. This is the matter of concern for the State and Central Governments. The percentage of schools exclusive for Children with Disability is very few and can be counted on fingers in Himachal, Mizoram and the nation as well. Stoesz, B. M.; Shooshtari, S.; Montgomery, J.; Martin, T.; Heinrichs and Douglas, J. (2014) also favoured the role of training and education to reduce the challenging behaviour of students with disabilities. They found that effective training programs like workshops, practical were effective for increasing knowledge/skills

and reducing the frequency of challenging behavior. Keeping in view the importance of education for Children with Disability Government of Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and India is trying to improve the education system of inclusive education and make it completely inclusive. However, it is important to be realistic about the time span in which this change will occur. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, or the Education for All initiative, was created not only for people with disabilities, but because of discrepancies in the general education sector. The importance of intention and effort should be recognized in this situation, as well as the immense improvements that the State and country has already made toward inclusion. The education system in Himachal, Mizoram and India is changing. It is time for policies to start aligning with realities on the ground, and for students of all ability levels to receive the education they deserve. We need to develop an inclusive design of learning to make the education joyful for all of the children so that the education for them is welcoming, learner friendly and beneficial and they feel as part of it, not apart of it.

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