

Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in India: Progress, Challenges, and Pathways to Educational Equity

Dr. Pragya Pathak and Dr. Neha Pandey

Assistant Professor, Department of Education
Swami Vivekanand University, Sagar

Abstract: *This comprehensive study examines the current state of inclusive education for children with disabilities in India, analyzing policy implementation, educational outcomes, and systemic barriers across diverse institutional settings. Using a mixed-methods approach, data was collected from 920 students with disabilities, 450 educators, 280 parents/caregivers, and 65 educational administrators across 20 states during 2022-2023. The research reveals significant progress in policy frameworks and enrollment rates, with children with disabilities (CWD) enrollment increasing from 1.2 million in 2016 to 2.7 million in 2023. However, substantial implementation gaps persist, including inadequate infrastructure (73% of schools lack basic accessibility), insufficient teacher training (only 34% of teachers received disability-specific training), and limited support services. The study identifies successful inclusive models, particularly in states like Kerala and Karnataka, while highlighting persistent challenges in rural areas and among marginalized communities. Findings contribute to understanding the complex dynamics of educational inclusion while providing evidence-based recommendations for strengthening India's inclusive education framework*

Keywords: Inclusive education, children with disabilities, educational equity, special needs education, accessibility, India