Developing Inclusive Practices: Case Study of the Model of Inclusion, Management and Leadership in a School in Bengaluru, India

Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Education
At the University of Northampton
2023

Rajani Padmanabhan

© Rajani Padmanabhan, 2023

This thesis is copyright material and no quotation from it may be published without proper acknowledgement.

Acknowledgments

I am deeply grateful to my supervisor Professor Richard Rose for his expert guidance and constant support and encouragement throughout my doctoral studies. I am indebted to Dr Emel Thomas, my supervisor, for her timely and nuanced guidance, critical inputs and constant feedback on every piece of writing sent to her. Both of you have been responsible in developing and refining my research skills, without which this research would not have been possible.

The field of education, and specifically ‘special education’ has made me the person I am today. My humble ‘pranams’ to Brindavan Education Trust, that has been instrumental in creating that space for me to grow from a volunteer in the organization to pursuing higher education in this field. Roopaji (Late), Gayathri and Kusumaji – the founders of this visionary organisation – I am grateful to you for the wonderfully inclusive and enabling environment you provide for all of us to grow and realise our ‘ikigai’.

My gratitude to the principal of MPES whose willingness and eagerness to take part in this research was truly motivating. The friendly directive set by her set the tone for the entire team at MPES to be open to this case study investigation. The core members of the special education team in the primary, middle and high school blocks - I was a stranger when I started my work there, thanks for answering my innumerable phone calls and messages. I am indebted to those teachers, students and school administrators who permitted me to use their data to inform my study.

My sincere thanks to Malathy and Divya, my fellow PhD students whose support and friendship has been invaluable. It has been a roller-coaster ride with all of us tightly knit together in the same coach. Jayashree and Vijaya, this study would not have been possible had it not been for your contributions and encouragement. Dr. Mary Doveston and Dr. Jament Johnson, you truly have been sources of inspiration, and have taught me the art of critical-self-evaluation and self-reflection.

My husband and my two boys – my pillars of strength and my anchors; this would not have been possible without your constant support and encouragement. Lastly, but certainly not the least, to my parents who would have been proud of my achievement.

Abstract

Policies advocating inclusive education (IE) have been adopted and implemented in many countries, including India. Literature from India in the area of inclusion and children with special needs (CWSN) has reported primarily on legislation, teacher attitudes and training, and challenges to IE. Few studies have reported pedagogical practices in schools and their practical implementation, or have described specific situations within Indian schools. This research investigated the inclusion of CWSN including those with learning difficulties (LD); social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD); attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) within one case study school; this was an urban private school (referred to as MPES) in Bengaluru, Karnataka. An interpretive approach was used to investigate the meaning of inclusion and SEN in practice at MPES, the model of inclusion (MoI) followed, implementation processes in the school and the roles and understandings of the key individuals who contribute to this process.

A case study approach was developed and informed by questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and observations as data collection tools. The sample population consisted of the principal and vice-principals; teachers including mainstream-teachers, coordinators, special-educators and counsellors; and children with and without SEN. Data from 120 questionnaires, 66 interviews and 16 sessions of observation were thematically analysed. The findings revealed that MPES follows a multilevel MoI that included main-classrooms and pull-out rooms thus ensuring a continuum of services. Teachers used labels and terms such as ‘hyper child’, ‘slow child’ and ‘autistic’, most of them in an uninformed way whereby this labelling was not based on a formal diagnosis of disability. The school valued the achievement of all learners, and paid attention to both academic and social outcomes as expressed by teachers’ and students’ statements on their sense of belonging and in ensuring that all children participated in the class and in extra-curricular activities. While teachers valued academic achievement of CWSN, it was accompanied with a lowering of expectations. A number of provisions in the school such as common extra-curricular activities, emphasis on the identification of SEN, processes of recommending children to pull-out rooms and accommodations for CWSN in the main-classroom and assessments support MPES in moving towards its goal of inclusion. While teachers highlighted progress towards inclusion, they also identified barriers such as inadequate teacher training, limited resources, and insufficient collaboration between mainstream-teachers and the special education (SpEd) team. MPES has a robust leadership with the principal seen as a person of action, who also demonstrates a shared vision and has a dynamic working style. Leadership styles that included authoritative, transformational and distributed contributed to the strong positive culture at MPES.

Recommendations include the introduction of a system of labelling that is not stigmatizing, but is factual and useful for lesson-planning and interacting with CWSN. The school would benefit from strengthening its provisions to include collaborative teaching and differential assessments that are ongoing. Continued professional development that connects teachers' practices with pedagogy and moves towards shared belief and collective agency are also recommended. Students' voices and active involvement of students is an area that needs impetus in the process of inclusion. The results and specific recommendations of this case study research may not be generalizable. However, aspects such as learnings from the MoI, focus on processes, acknowledgment by various stakeholders that inclusion is a dynamic process, and leadership aspects including multiple types of leadership may be borrowed by other Indian schools also committed to inclusion.
Keywords: inclusion, model of inclusion, India, leadership, teacher training and attitude

Table of Contents

Abbreviations 1
Chapter 1 - Introduction 4
  1.1 A brief background to approaches to inclusion and disability 6
  1.2 Inclusion and the Indian context 8
  1.3 Rationale 9
  1.4 Research aims and questions 11
  1.5 Chapter summary and thesis overview 12
Chapter 2 – India and Educational Inclusion 14
  2.1 The Indian schooling system 14
  2.2 Overview of inclusive educational policies in India 19
  2.3 Schooling and teacher training: providing for children with special needs in India 27
  2.4 Challenges of inclusion in India 28
  2.5 Chapter summary 32
Chapter 3 – Literature Review 34
  3. 1 Defining inclusion 34
  3.2 Conceptualizing disability 40
    3.2.1 The medical or individual model 40
    3.2.2 The social model 41
    3.2.3 The capabilities approach 44
    3.3 Inclusive school 45
    3.4 Special education needs (SEN) 47
  3.5 Inclusion, inclusive school and SEN in the Indian context and as used in this study 48
    3.5.1 Literature on inclusive education in India 48
    3.5.2 Inclusion, SEN and inclusive school in the Indian context 50
    3.5.3 Inclusion, SEN and the inclusive school in this study 53
    3.5.4 SEN and CWSN, mainstream and the inclusive school in this study 54
  3.6 Chapter summary 55
Chapter 4 – Thematic Framework for Inclusive Practice in India 56
  4.1 Context 56
  4.2 The three main studies for developing the themes 57
    4.2.1 Index for Inclusion 58
    4.2.2 Loreman's input-processes-output model 59

    - 4.2.3 UNESCO's A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education 61
  - 4.3 Thematic framework 62
    - 4.3.1. Indicators of inclusion - participation, achievement and social inclusion 64
    - 4.3.2 Model of Inclusion 65
    - 4.3.3 School and classroom practices 66
    - 4.3.3.1 Curriculum 67
    - 4.3.4 Collaboration and shared responsibility 69
    - 4.3.5 Teacher training and attitude 70
    - 4.3.6 Culture 71
    - 4.3.7 Leadership 72
  - 4.4 Chapter summary 73
- Chapter 5 Methodology 75
  - 5.1 Methodology 75
    - 5.1.1 Case study 77
  - 5.2 Data collection instruments 79
    - 5.2.1 Questionnaire 81
    - 5.2.2 Observation 85
    - 5.2.3 Interview 87
    - 5.2.4 Phases of data collection: 89
  - 5.3 Sampling 89
  - 5.3.1 Selection of the study school 90
    - 5.3.2 Sample size and strategy for participants in MPES 92
  - 5.4 Piloting 96
  - 5.5 Ethical considerations: 97
    - 5.6 Establishing trustworthiness in the study 98
  - 5.7 Data analysis 99
  - 5.8 Chapter summary 106
- Chapter 6: Findings - Structures, Processes and Practices at MPES 107
  - 6.1 Model of inclusion followed in MPES 107
    - 6.1.1 Teachers views on placement 112
  - 6.2 Processes 113
    - 6.2.1 Preparation of curriculum 113

6.2.2 Assessments ... 113
6.2.3 Process of identification / assessment of SEN ... 114
6.3 School and classroom practices ... 115
6.3.1 Curriculum ... 115
6.3.2 Teaching strategies ... 116
6.3.3 Behaviour management strategies ... 121
6.4 Teacher training ... 123
6.5 Chapter summary ... 125
Chapter 7: Findings - Indicators of Inclusion ... 126
7.1 Description of SEN at MPES ... 126
7.1.1 Descriptions of SEN ... 126
7.1.2 A dilemma in identification and terminology of SEN ... 128
7.1.3 Description of SEN by the SpEd team ... 130
7.2 Indicators of inclusion - participation, achievement and social inclusion ... 131
7.2.1 Views on participation ... 132
7.2.2 Views on achievement and inclusion ... 134
7.2.3 Achievement and social inclusion ... 135
7.3 Chapter summary ... 137
Chapter 8: Findings - Culture at MPES ... 139
8.1 Culture of the school ... 139
8.1.1 Building a community and establishing inclusive values ... 139
8.2 Collaboration and shared responsibility ... 142
8.2.1 Collaboration between teachers and the SpEd team and shared responsibility ... 142
8.2.2 Collaboration among mainstream-teachers ... 147
8.2.3 Collaboration among school and parents ... 148
8.3 Teacher attitudes ... 148
8.4 Chapter summary ... 151
Chapter 9: Findings - Leadership ... 153
9.1 People in an important role in decision-making and practicing inclusion ... 153
9.1.1 Role of teachers ... 153
9.1.2 Role of parents ... 154
9.1.3 Role of children ... 155

9.2 Leadership – aspects and types 157

9.2.1 Shared vision 157

9.2.2 Roles, responsibilities and accountability at different levels of leadership 158

9.2.3 Active presence of the principal 160

9.3 Chapter summary 161

Chapter 10: Discussion 162

10.1 Model of Inclusion 162

10.2 Description of SEN 165

10.3 School and classroom practices 166

10.4 Indicators of inclusion: participation, achievement and social inclusion 169

10.5 Culture, Teacher Attitudes, Collaboration and Shared Responsibility 174

10.5.1 Culture at MPES 174

10.5.2 Attitudes of teachers 176

10.5.3 Collaboration and shared responsibility 179

10.6 Leadership 181

10.6.1 People responsible for inclusion 181

10.6.2 Setting direction and influencing other's thinking, human development and organizational development 183

10.6.3 Dynamic Styles of leadership at different levels 184

10.6.4 Communication 185

10.7 Chapter summary 186

Chapter 11: Conclusion 188

11.1 Synopsis of the study and contribution to knowledge 188

11.2 Potential impacts of the study 190

11.3 Recommendations 193

11.3.1 A positive system of labelling 193

11.3.2 Continuum of services 193

11.3.3 Continued professional development 194

11.3.4 Listening to students' voices 195

11.4 Reflections, strengths and limitations of the research project 196

Appendix-1-Questionnaire 199

Appendix-2-Observation 206

Appendix-3-Interview-Schedule 208

Appendix-4-Codes 210
Appendix-5-Questionnaire-Collated... 212
Appendix-6-InterviewTranscript 217
Appendix-7-Observation-Coded... 219
Appendix-8-RQ1-Interview-Coded 221
Appendix-9-Related Terms used in SEN.. 223
Appendix-10-Sample Framework for Labelling... 226
Appendix-11 227
Appendix–12... 228
Glossary 229
References... 231

Tables and Figures

TABLE 2.1: KEY FEATURES OF BOARDS OF EDUCATION IN INDIA 18
DIAGRAM 2.1: OVERVIEW OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY PROGRESSION IN IE IN INDIA 20
TABLE 3.1: MODELS OF INCLUSION 35
TABLE 4.1: INITIAL THEMATIC FRAMEWORK - PARAMETERS AND INITIAL THEMES ARRIVED FOR THE RESEARCH AIMS AND QUESTIONS 63
TABLE 5.1: DIVISIONS AT MPES 79
TABLE 5.2: DATA SET FOR THE STUDY 80
TABLE 5.3: SAMPLING SIZE AND STRATEGY OF TEACHERS 93
TABLE 5.4: TEACHERS SHORTLISTED TO BE INTERVIEWED ON THE BASIS OF QUESTIONNAIRES 95
TABLE 5.5: PHASES OF DATA ANALYSIS 100
TABLE 5.6: THEMATIC FRAMEWORK 104
TABLE 5.7: CODES TO THEMES MAP FOR ONE THEME 105
DIAGRAM-6.1: PLACEMENT OPTIONS 109
DIAGRAM-6.2: MODEL OF INCLUSION AT MPES 110
TABLE 6.1: DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRE ON TEACHER STRATEGIES USED BY TEACHERS OF CLASSES-1 TO 10 117
TABLE 7.1: DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRE ON SEN OBSERVED BY TEACHERS OF CLASSES-1 TO 10 127
TABLE 8.1: DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE ROLE OF SPECIAL-EDUCATORS FROM TEACHERS CLASSES-1TO 10 143
TABLE 10.1: MAPPING TEACHERS' STRATEGIES TO PEDAGOGY 167

Abbreviations

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
ASD	Autism Spectrum Syndrome
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education
CIE	Cambridge International Examinations
CISCE	Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations
CWD	Children or Child With Disability
CWSN	Children or Child With Special Needs
CWOSN	Children or Child Without Special Needs
CW&WOSN	Children or Child With and Without Special Needs
DI	Differentiated Instruction
DSM	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
ECS	Extra Curriculum Support
GLAD	Grade Level Assessment Device
GOI	Government of India
GoK	Government of Karnataka
HFASD	High Functioning Autism Spectrum Syndrome
HOD	Head of Department
IB	International Baccalaureate
ICD	International Classifications of Diseases

ID	Intellectual Disability
IE	Inclusive Education
IEP	Individualised Education Program
KET	Kalpavriskha Education Trust (pseudonym for the special school where I work)
LD	Learning Difficulty
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resources Development
MoI	Model of Inclusion
MPES	Murari Private Education Society (pseudonym for study school)
MTSS	Multilevel System of Support
NCTE	National Council for Teacher Education
NEP	National Education Policy
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NIMHANS	National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences
NIOS	National Institute of Open Schooling
PIED	Project for Integrated Education for the Disabled
PWD	People/Person(s) With Disability
RCI	Rehabilitation Council of India
RPWD	Right to People with Disabilities
RQ	Research Question
RTE	Right To Free and Compulsory Education, commonly known as Right To Education

SEBD	Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
SEN	Special Education Needs
SISL	Supporting Inclusive School Leadership
SLD	Specific Learning Difficulty
SpEd	Special Education
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
USA	United States of America
W&WOSN	With and Without Special Needs
WHO	World Health Organization

Chapter 1 - Introduction

School environments are an important part of a child's day-to-day life from an early age. After their homes, the first place that most children spend without the presence of their mothers and families are schools. Education is often regarded as being the cornerstone to progress and development (Biestra, 2015). In almost every country inclusive education (IE) has emerged as one of the most dominant and contentious issues in education (Armstrong *et al.*, 2016; Rose, 2010; Mieghem *et al.*, 2020). Across the world there is an emphasis on improving the quality of education systems and the practices involved to ensure that the needs of all learners are met (UNESCO, 1994). India, like many other countries, is a signatory to the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Special Educational Needs (UNESCO, 1994), and has reformulated its policies to promote the inclusion of children with special needs (CWSN) into mainstream schools. The United Nations Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006) emphasises the right of CWSN to attend a regular school. Over the intervening years the Government of India has included the concept of IE in many of its policies such as the Right to Education Act (SSA, 2000; RTE, 2005 and 2009). These initiatives, policies and legislations discuss the concept of integration, inclusion, least restrictive environment and segregation for children with severe disabilities – with the main goal being education for all, in line with the sustainable development goals (UN, 2015).

The term inclusion implies making provision for learners with diverse needs such as children with disabilities, with special educational needs (SEN), those from different economic backgrounds, those with socio-emotional behavioural issues, and others from groups vulnerable to exclusion such as refugees and migrants, and children from minority communities and girls. Srivastava *et al.*, (2015, p.179) rightly point out that IE is seen as 'partly running parallel to an international agenda of education for all'. Including many children who are yet denied opportunities to attend school is a primary goal in both economically advantaged and disadvantaged countries. In developing and under developed countries (*sic)* the focus is on getting children to school and in reducing exclusionary pressures such as ensuring girls and those from marginalized groups have equal rights and access to physically attend schools (Srivastava *et al.*, 2015). In economically disadvantaged countries inclusion often focuses on special provision to maximize learning of all children, including those few children who are placed in a special school away from mainstream and addressing issues such as children who drop out of school, or leave school with no qualifications (Ainscow and César, 2006). An important aspect of educational inclusion and not being considered as separate from it, is social inclusion; of ensuring that children feel a sense of belonging and participation (Booth and Ainscow, 2002). Integration refers to special provision for children outside the general classroom for some part of the day. Integration involves focusing on a small group of children and tailoring instruction and curriculum to address their needs; and does not necessarily change classroom practices (Sebba and Ainscow, 1996). It refers to placing children in the mainstream classroom where they are trained to fit into the existing practices (Reindal, 2016).

Inclusion is more a process of changes in the school system, environment and provision to address the needs of all learners; and in addressing barriers that limit the presence, participation and achievement of all learners (UNESCO, 2017). The term IE is used in the implementation of inclusion in policy documents, or when schools formulate policies and processes (UNESCO, 2017). For example, IE is written into India's constitution as a fundamental right for all citizens. Part IX, Article 45 of the Constitution states "the state shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years". Inclusion and IE in its most general sense goes beyond disability and can mean education for all. This study specifically investigated the inclusion of CWSN such as learning difficulties (LD), social emotional behavioural difficulties (SEBD), attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) within one case study setting. Inclusion and IE have a slightly different focus with a common goal, the former focusing on processes while the later more on policies. Inclusion is a broad term, and cannot be achieved unless we have inclusive education processes. Hence, in this study the terms inclusion and IE are used interchangeably. One definition of inclusion that conveys both its simplicity and complexity is that of a condition in which 'every learner matters and matters equally' (UNESCO, 2017, p.12). School is a place for academic attainment; and socio-emotional and behavioural development. According to Ainscow and César, (2006, p.231) the "aim of IE is to eliminate social exclusion that is a consequence of attitudes and responses to diversity in race, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender and ability" and that "education is a foundation for a more just society". Reindal (2016) in her discussion of various interpretations of inclusion opines that inclusion relates to the well-being and dignity of each child, and that it should be practiced even when learning outcomes are poor. The various interactions in a school such as between children of the same grade, children of different grades, children and teachers; and the myriad spaces such as the bus ride to and from school, the classroom, the canteen and the sports ground offer children much scope for their overall development. Given such complexities with definition and application, this thesis explores systems and practices in a school committed to inclusion in Bengaluru, India. A case study approach was adopted to understand how MPES (the study school) understands CWSN and inclusion, the processes and systems followed and leadership aspects.

1.1 A brief background to approaches to inclusion and disability

Before the approach to inclusion became wide-focused to include children from all backgrounds and children from marginalized groups who may be vulnerable to exclusion, along with children with disability (CWD); integration and mainstreaming were concepts that were widely spoken about (Göransson and Nilholm, 2014). Segregation of CWSN, over-representation and stigma of labelling due to being provided with special education led to a rights issue and towards parents and others pressing for IE. Including CWSN in mainstream schools was also an important factor in moving towards developing more inclusive practices and training teachers in managing diversity (Rose, 2016). IE has shifted from being a story about CWSN to one about including children from all kinds of physical, social and cognitive backgrounds (Qvortrup and Qvortrup, 2017). An analysis of research in countries such as Australia, England, Scandinavia and the United States reveals that due to increased bureaucracy, schools have sometimes claimed that CWD cannot be educated unless extra resources were available (Ainscow and César, 2006). Dissatisfaction with this led to a change in thinking from integrating children into schools to reorganizing schools and the form of teaching provided (Ainscow and César, 2006). In the 1970s and 1980s, western countries focused upon integrating CWD into mainstream schools. In the UK, the Warnock report published in 1978 introduced 'special education needs' as a concept to describe learners who experience difficulties irrespective of their abilities or disabilities (Terzi, 2005b). The report also recognized the right of these learners to be educated in mainstream schools. Inclusion as a concept gained popularity in the 1990s (Reindal, 2016; Norwich, 2014; Göransson and Nilholm, 2014). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was passed in the United States of America in 1990, and mandated the placement of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE) (Poon-McBrayer and Wong, 2013). LRE suggests that a disabled child's education should happen in the classroom or school he or she would have attended if not disabled. The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994) is commonly associated with the emergence of the wider adoption of the principle of inclusion in education. Policy-makers, researchers, educators and parents were not only focused on including CWD into general schools, the scope went beyond extending special needs to any child who may need an additional or special provision due to any reason based on context. "UNESCO had to continuously negotiate whether 'meeting special educational needs in the mainstream' meant to keep people with disabilities as primary target group of IE or rather implied to encompass further on the heterogeneity of learners" (Reindal, 2016, p.4).

Disability has been conceptualized along the individual or medical deficit model, social model and more recently along the lines of the capabilities approach. The medical deficit model suggests that disabilities are individual to the child and hence may lead to restriction in performing tasks, while the social model suggests that inadequacies in the system contribute to the child being excluded or not included in the activities of the school. According to Kirby (2017, p.177) "in the medical model students are diagnosed and receive services to ameliorate a deficit. Special education is used as a tool to fix the deficit". According to the social model, disability is socially constructed (Kirby, 2017; Terzi, 2005b; Norwich, 2014); and internal differences are relatively minor (Shakespeare and Watson, 1997). The capabilities approach as developed by Sen and Nussbaum suggests that disability does not depend on biological or social factors (Terzi, 2005a). Every individual has certain functionings which may be limited by their disabilities; however, what one can do is determined by opportunities or capabilities that one can choose from (Terzi, 2005a). This conceptualization of disability has a bearing on how inclusion is interpreted. CWSN may have different skill sets, which give rise to different needs, that sometimes may require a different provision. In the medical model, these needs are seen as within the child, and the provisions needed for learning and being included in the school are seen as additional; something which children without SEN (CWOSN) may not need. According to the social model, if schools were inclusive, the processes and systems of the school would ensure that all children have access to learning, and hence the question of additional provision does not arise. While from the capabilities approach, an individual will have different skill-sets which are his functionings; and if opportunities are given, it helps them achieve their potential.

1.2 Inclusion and the Indian context

India too, like other countries, has had education and IE in its policies over the years. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act commonly abbreviated to the Right to Education Act (RTE) was drafted in 2005 by the Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India (MHRD, GOI). This came into force in 2009. In 2009, the GOI launched the Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS) scheme with the objective of enabling all students with disabilities, to pursue further four years of secondary schooling after completing eight years of elementary schooling in an inclusive and enabling environment (IEDSS, 2009). In India, the word IE is brought into context primarily with disabilities as noticed in several Indian policy documents, an aspect that is discussed in Sections 2.2 and 3.5.2. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD) (2016) increased the number of disabilities covered from 7 to 21 and included cerebral palsy, speech and language difficulty, specific learning difficulties (SLD) and ASD. However, the recent National Education Policy (2020) which is yet to be implemented has suggested significant changes in the structure of the education system. Currently, children in the age group 3-6 years are not covered in the formal education system, since Class-1 starts at age 6. (In India, class is the equivalent term for grade. A list of such words is given in the Glossary at the end of this thesis). In the revised structure, early education starting at 3 years is emphasised with a focus on the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy. The assessment system and teacher training also are witnessing a formidable change. The Indian context is further discussed in detail in Chapter 2 and Section 3.5. These changes allude to a rich and progressive policy landscape (Johansson *et al*., 2021) leading to an increase in the number of CWD in mainstream schools. According to Johansson *et al*., (2021, p.1), 61% of CWD aged between 5–19 years are attending an educational institution compared to the dismal figure of less than 2% in 2001–2002. The expected years of schooling has increased from 8.3 years in 2000 to 12.2 years in 2019; and the mean years of schooling has increased from 4.4 years in 2000 to 6.5 years in 2019 – thus reflecting an upward curve in the impact of educational policies and its implementation (UNDP, 2019).

1.3 Rationale

India being my birth and lived-in country, and having chosen the profession of education, I am both a participant and witness to the education system. When I changed my profession from engineering (in which I previously qualified) to a special-educator, I was a complete novice. My induction into teaching CWSN started as an observer in KET, a learning centre for children with diverse learning needs. In my first year of teaching, with no experience or qualification in education, I helped another teacher with making teaching and learning material, and substituted for teachers when they were absent. I saw a wide spectrum of children with different SEN, though I was not aware of the specific labels applied to them back then. Children with less severe SEN made me wonder why they would not fit into mainstream schools, children with more severe SEN made me wonder what would they do after they left KET at 16 years of age. I also noticed that discrepancies in these children were not the same across all developmental areas such as academic skills, socio-emotional skills and behaviour. I enrolled into a 12-month course with practical and theory classes to get an initial understanding of this area with a Bengaluru-based organization that is a pioneer in special education training programs for parents and learners. I have now been with KET for 18 years, and have done my masters with the University of Northampton in IE. In my capacity as academic coordinator at KET I interact with students, parents and educators from our centre and other special and mainstream schools. I teach on teacher training programmes offered by KET for both special-educators and mainstream-teachers. These experiences and interactions have raised many questions in me such as – how is inclusion defined? Is it important to have a formal diagnosis of a SEN? With not much formal training in special education or inclusive approaches how do mainstream-teachers teach a class with diversity? How can schools build robust processes and systems to provide for learning and make school accessible for all learners? How and when will children with severe SEN in KET go back to mainstream, and who are the stakeholders in the transition process? What does a teacher do when she wants to introduce inclusive approaches, but is bound by the management and organisational policies and processes? The principal of a school may want to move towards inclusion, what are stages involved in it? Can infrastructure be an obstacle in this process of inclusion? How does one work on collaboration among teachers and ongoing professional development for teachers?

In my review of literature and from my professional experiences I also understood that there are multiple terms around inclusion such as integration, exclusion, school culture, sense of belonging, and least restrictive environment. Also, that there are multiple models of inclusion. While purists argued that inclusion implies all learning happens in the classroom with no withdrawals (Kirby, 2017); there are models where children are withdrawn for particular parts of the day for intensive remediation, hence are excluded from their classroom for those parts of the day (Qvortrup and Qvortrup, 2017). In my experience, I have seen schools where CWSN stay back after school for extended remediation. In Bengaluru in particular I have seen various ways in which schools practice inclusion such as: resource-rooms where children are pulled-out for certain periods in a day for intensive remediation, segregated classroom for CWSN Class-6 onwards but on the same campus, and CWSN stay in the main-classroom with the special-educator along with the class-teacher. In literature on inclusion, some commonly used terms were differentiated instruction (DI), universal design for learning (UDL), and assessments for and of learning. These were explained with respect to countries that have different contexts such as infrastructure in the classroom, class size, teacher-student ratio, training of teachers and culture of the people to that of India. There are also differences in legislations, mandates by the government, and the system of schooling (such as government and private schools). This made me wonder the extent to which the concepts in inclusion that are being applied were applicable in my country. In an attempt to address my personal queries, I have read widely on the topic of inclusion within an Indian context. Primarily this has been in the areas of legislation, teacher attitudes and training, and challenges to IE from authors such as Singal (2006a, 2006b), Srivastava *et al*., (2015), Sharma and Das, (2015) and Johansson (2014). A book on case studies of 3 schools in Delhi that followed different models of inclusion by Jha (2010); and a study that reports on practices followed by two schools that were inclusive from Hyderabad by Sawhney (2015) were a few examples of studies on implementation of IE. Literature addressing specific situations in Indian schools beyond these are limited. Rose *et al*., (2021) concur that there are significant gaps in literature in the area of IE from India. They comment that research on effectiveness of pedagogical practices has been rarely reported, and that there is little empirical evidence to enable a discussion of efficacy or practical implementation. I was keen to understand how these approaches and theories would apply in India; and to understand the process of inclusion in schools. While the educational policies have undergone changes, there is a lack of literature and data regarding the classroom processes, teacher's understanding of student diversity and their experiences (Johansson *et al*., 2021). The importance of increasing empirical study in this area and gaining greater understanding of inclusion in schools in India is apparent. With this in mind, this small-scale case study takes an empirical approach in understanding the meaning of inclusion in schools, the implementation process and the various people who contribute to this. Moving towards inclusive practices in schools is influenced by several factors including policies, the existing education milieu, culture, training and attitude of teachers. Having grown-up in India and having worked in the education sector in Bengaluru, I was well-placed to conduct a study that would contribute to knowledge in this area. My work experience in KET and education in the field of IE gave me an orientation towards this topic. This also helped in maintaining a neutral and objective view in conducting this research study as an outsider in MPES. India, with its diversity has a different system of education. Since the topic was inclusion, a school that was considered to have a commitment towards inclusion was chosen. I also was keen on observing a school at work, and talking to people in the school; hence accessibility was a primary concern – which made private schools a more likely choice. Other parameters that were kept in mind while choosing this study school are explained in Chapter 5 on methodology. MPES, an urban private school in Bengaluru, capital of Karnataka was chosen. The study school had a total strength of 360 teachers for 6500 children from nursery to Class-12. This included teachers of academic subjects, special-educators, coordinators, heads-of-department (HOD) and teachers for extra-curricular activities such as drama, sports, theatre and yoga.

1.4 Research aims and questions

Given the wealth of literature on inclusion, rapid legislative development in India and my own professional queries three overarching intentions for research were established:

> To investigate the description of inclusion and describe the population of CWSN included in MPES (the study school);
>
> To investigate the model of inclusion (MoI) followed and provisions made for CWSN in MPES; and
>
> To investigate the contributions of key stakeholders and providers in MPES towards making it inclusive.

Based on these objectives the following research questions were formulated:

1) How is MPES describing inclusion and SEN?
2) What are the provisions made by MPES to include children with SEN?
3) Who are the influential individuals in decision-making and practice in developing inclusive education in this school?

The inclusion angle in this study is narrow and is restricted to including children with a limited range of SEN. However, the various definitions and approaches to inclusion and SEN were explored to gain more insight into this widely debated topic. A case study approach was adopted with qualitative methods dominating the research. The data collection instruments used were questionnaire, interviews, observation and documents. All data collection was completed by myself, with multiple visits to MPES. Questionnaires were given only to mainstream-teachers which also included some coordinators and HOD. Semi-structured, face-to-face, one-on-one interviews with teachers, HOD, coordinators, SpEd team, the vice-principals, principal and children with and without SEN (CW&WOSN) were conducted within the one school site. Non-participant observation was conducted over 16 working days across Classes-1 to 10 and in pull-out rooms.

1.5 Chapter summary and thesis overview

Inclusion is a widely debated topic and there are several models of inclusion. India like many other countries has formulated legislation to make the schooling system more inclusive. Having been part of the education system, I undertook this research study to understand the concept of inclusion, policies in this field, its development in other countries and in India and its implementation in a specific context. The case study approach adopted for this qualitative research study helped me understand this topic better and arrive at a MoI adopted in this particular instance.

This study is presented in the following manner:

Chapter 2 – India and Educational Inclusion.

In this chapter I set the country and context; and present an overview of the legislation in India in the area of IE, challenges faced in implementing inclusion, details about the schooling system and teacher training.

Chapter 3 – Literature Review

In this chapter I discuss the various definition of and approaches to implementing inclusion, conceptualization of disability; and the meaning of the term SEN and inclusive school based on a review of literature. This chapter concludes with how these terms are used in the Indian context and in this study.

Chapter 4 – Thematic Framework

I discuss the process of choosing the three main studies that were used for arriving at the thematic framework for this study based on experiential, contextual and cultural considerations; a review of literature; and some indicative literature on themes for the study in this chapter.

Chapter 5 – Methodology

I present various aspects of design including research design strategy, selection of data collection instruments, sampling methods and ethical considerations. Details of data analysis such as codes and their application, refining themes from the initial themes derived during literature review, and their connection to research questions are also presented.

Chapter 6, 7, 8 and 9 – Findings

In these chapters I state the findings from collected data with respect to themes arrived at in the theoretical framework.

Chapter 10 – Discussion

In this chapter I discuss the main findings and connect them to literature. Similarities and differences between literature and findings are also presented.

Chapter 11 - Conclusion

This chapter includes a synopsis of the study; contributions from this study and recommendations. I also highlight the strengths and limitations of the study.

Chapter 2 – India and Educational Inclusion

In this chapter I present the development of educational policies in India with regard to IE and SEN. The structure of schooling in India, the different boards of education and some literature regarding teacher training are also discussed. Finally, challenges to the process of inclusion in the Indian context are mentioned.

2.1 The Indian schooling system

The Indian education system is one of the largest in the world with more than 1.5 million schools and 250 million children (UNICEF, 2018). In India, schools are run by the government (referred to as government schools), privately managed individuals or organizations (private schools), or privately run by organizations aided by the government (aided schools) (Srivastava, 2018).

> 68% children in 6–14 years of age group are enrolled in government schools with 42% and 76% of the urban and rural students in government schools, respectively. Private school enrolment stands at 58% in urban areas to 24% in rural areas. This shows a strong establishment of private schooling in India (Bhatnagar and Das, 2014, p.257).

Government schools offer free education, while private and aided schools have their own fee structures. Most states have a regulatory board for the fee structure of private and aided schools. In Karnataka, there were 48210 government schools, 7256 aided schools and 19679 private schools (GoK, 2019) in the year 2018-19. The state and central governments are jointly responsible for school education in India. The central government is primarily responsible for the quality of education, and has several policies to that effect; the state has the flexibility and responsibility for the organization and the structure of education (Sharma and Das, 2015). Schooling consists of three stages: primary, upper primary or middle, and secondary. Children aged from 6 to 11 years attend primary-school (Grades 1-4), those aged from 11 to 13/14 years attend upper primary or middle-school (Grade 5-7) and those aged from 14/15 to 18 attend secondary-school. The National Education Policy (NEP, 2020), has proposed a change in these stages which are yet to be implemented, see Section 2.2. The medium of instruction in schools could either be English or the language of the state. For example, in the national capital, New Delhi, there are Hindi medium schools; whilst in the state of Karnataka where this research study was conducted there are Kannada medium schools. It is worth noting that the medium of instruction in urban areas is predominantly English. In rural areas, there are more schools that are not English medium, and most of these are government schools. India is a multicultural nation with 29 states, 7 union territories and 23 legally acknowledged languages. It has its own unique education system with a wide range of education boards at the national and state level (Srivastava, 2018). The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) are national level education boards that are followed by schools across the country. The volume and content of the subjects is different in both boards; however, both offer a range of subjects. English is a compulsory language, other languages such as Hindi, the vernacular language followed in states such as Kannada, Tamil and Bengali; and foreign languages such as French, Spanish and German are offered for second and third languages. Subjects offered generally are math, science and social science. CBSE is among the most prominent and perhaps most widely acknowledged education board at the national level in India and administers exams for both private and public attending school students (Srivastava, 2018). The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) seeks to make the educational system versatile for all students. It provides educational services in the distance learning mode through printed materials and occasional face-to-face programmes in designated study centres; and also provides skill-based vocational courses. The NIOS is a national board that holds secondary and senior-secondary exams comparable to the CBSE and CISCE. It is child-centric and helps students to make choices on what to learn and when to learn. Some unique provisions offered by this board include – completion of secondary education over 5 years as compared to CBSE and CISCE that mandate 1 year, the only compulsory subject is English, second and third language are not mandatory and children can choose from a wide range of subjects without applying for special exemptions. For example, CWSN or children who are actively into sports take one subject a year or two subjects a year and complete their secondary education over a period of up to five years; children who are not inclined towards science and math get into the humanities stream right from Class-10. In the other boards, if children have to drop second language/math/science they would have to furnish a certificate of disability from an organized authority in order to do so. Examination boards at the state level are unique to each Indian state and follow a separate syllabus different from the CBSE, CISCE and NIOS. Regional languages and heritage have a key role in the delivery of the curriculum at the state level.

Besides the national and state boards there are also international boards of education that schools utilise such as Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) and International Baccalaureate (IB). Table 2.1 provides a comparison of some key features of Indian boards of education.

	State Boards	**CBSE**	**CISCE**	**NIOS**
Year of establishment	Various starting from 1921 Karnataka Education Board in 1966.	1962	1958	1989 Only board that provides education in the distance learning mode
Recognition	National and International	National and International	National and International	National and International
Number of subjects	5 (including English and state language)	5 (including English and 1 other language)	5 compulsory and 3 additional subjects	5 (including English)
	Other subjects are math, social studies, science CWSN get an exemption for the state language And drop math and science to take up subjects such as political science and sociology.	Other subjects offered generally are math, social studies, science Other subjects such as environmental science, painting, vocational training can be chosen based on assessment for SEN.	Compulsory – English, history, civics and geography and an Indian language Any two subjects from a range of subjects including math, science, computer science, economics and foreign languages And one subject from subjects such as computer applications, home-science, cookery, painting, music.	Compulsory – English Other subjects offered can be chosen from a wide range including the sciences such as math and science; humanities, arts and commerce such as – economics, business studies, social studies, painting and music.
Accommodations for CWSN	Math, science, social studies are the subjects generally offered by all schools. Any exemption from these and choosing other subjects would need (1) an assessment from an authorized by an organization approved by the board (2) most schools don't have tutors for other subjects.			Only compulsory subject is English. No special assessment needed to drop the core subjects of math, science and social studies.
Provisions for CWSN	Accommodations such as: extra time for writing examination papers, a reader/scribe/prompter during the exam, and use of a calculator.			

	State Boards	**CBSE**	**CISCE**	**NIOS**
	Boards have recommended assessment organization who issue a certificate of disability and a recommendation for extenuating provisions. Each board has different recommended assessment organizations. (Note 1)			
Number of students who have attempted the examination in April/May 2022 in Karnataka	8,73,794	62529	2169	88621 (this is in entire India. State wise figures were not available)

Note 1: For example, in Bengaluru, the NIOS board recognises Spastic Society of Karnataka and CBSE recognizes NIMHANS and Dhrishti.

Table 2.1: Key features of boards of education in India

2.2 Overview of inclusive educational policies in India

Education is written into India's constitution as a fundamental right for all citizens. Part IX, Article 45 of the Constitution states, "the state shall endeavor to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years" (Aruna *et al.,* 2016, p.24). Educational legislation in India in recent years, in common with that seen in much of the world, has responded to international initiatives and agreements to promote a more inclusive approach to schooling (Diagram 2.1). The Government of India (GOI), through its various programmes focusing on education for all and education for CWD has been targeting schools to provide free and compulsory education for all children under the age of 14 years (RTE, 2009). As a result of the emphasis on education for all, the enrolment of children in schools has reached close to universal levels (universalisation in this context refers to making education available to all children in the age of group of 6-14 years), there has been a significant growth in enrollment of girls; with the male and female youth literacy rates at 94% and 92%, respectively (Niti Aayog, 2019 in Singal, 2019). Several signs of progress have also been seen in schools such as appointment of special-educator, resource-rooms, and adaptations in curriculum, teaching methods, evaluations and an alternative education system (Srivastava, 2018). At the same time, there are concerns including drop in student learning outcomes, increase in drop-out rates, low regular attendance and poor quality of teaching (Singal, 2019). Sharma and Das (2015, p.58) succinctly summarize that the GOI has been committed to equalizing educational opportunities for all children, including those with disabilities, and is evident in the growth of the number of CWD receiving education; though it still is not significant.

In the 1960s the Ministry of Education split and a new Ministry of Social Welfare (now known as Ministry for Social Justice and Empowerment) was created which was responsible for the 'weak and vulnerable' sections of the society (Aruna *et al.,* 2016). This ministry largely focused on rehabilitation more than education; and gave grants to non-profit organizations that worked with CWD. This marked an important change in how special education was organized and funded; and resulted in inadvertently excluding CWD from the mainstream. The Kothari Commission (1964) in its report drew the attention back to education and stated that education for CWD should not be only on humanitarian grounds; but from the viewpoint of integrating them back into mainstream and enabling CWD to overcome their handicap; however, this was not implemented (Aruna *et al.,*

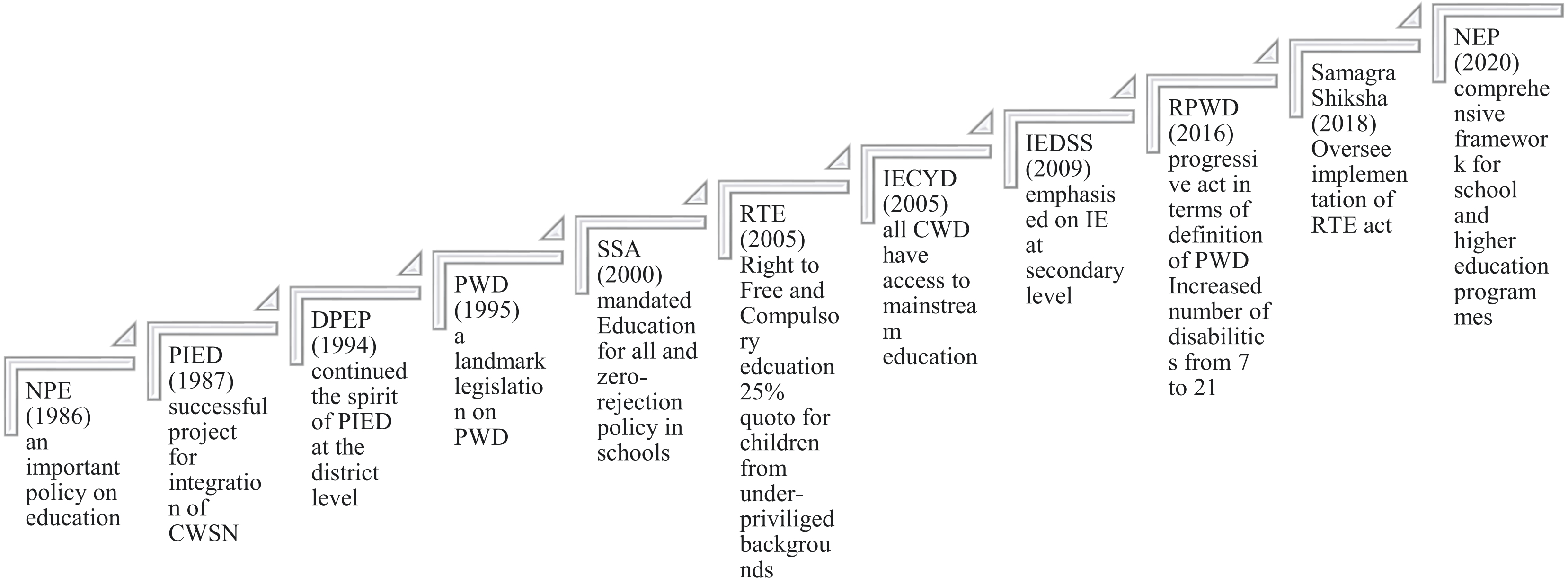

NPE (1986) an important policy on education
PIED (1987) successful project for integration of CWSN
DPEP (1994) continued the spirit of PIED at the district level
PWD (1995) a landmark legislation on PWD
SSA (2000) mandated Education for all and zero-rejection policy in schools
RTE (2005) Right to Free and Compulsory edcuation 25% quoto for children from under-priviliged backgrounds
IECYD (2005) all CWD have access to mainstream education
IEDSS (2009) emphasised on IE at secondary level
RPWD (2016) progressive act in terms of definition of PWD Increased number of disabilities from 7 to 21
Samagra Shiksha (2018) Oversee implementation of RTE act
NEP (2020) comprehensive framework for school and higher education programmes

Diagram 2.1: Overview of legislation and policy progression in IE in India

Source: Adapted from Srivastava (2018, p.276)

2016). The National Policy on Education (NPE) (1986) stressed on the removal of ‘disparities’ and raised the need to address the needs of all students; and about integrating the physically and mentally handicapped. The NPE (1986, p.11) stated that children with mild handicaps such as motor handicaps should be included in mainstream classrooms, whereas children with severe handicaps should be placed in special schools. It is important to note that terms such as disabilities, handicap and special needs are used in official government documents interchangeably. This probably is a direct result of the fact that English has been an official language in India, and IE is more developed in socially-advantaged countries such as USA and western Europe (Singal 2019, Rose 2016). The Project for Integrated Education Development (PIED) launched in 1987, stated that unless the general education system is made responsive to educational needs of all children including CWSN, the goal of education for all cannot be realised (Sharma and Deppeler, 2005). Thus, implying that the schools have to be organized in a way that the educational needs of all children can be met effectively. This was implemented by adopting a ‘composite area approach’ where some regular schools in a cluster were converted to integrated schools that shared specialized equipment, instructional materials and special-educators. Teacher training modules were also conducted with exposure to general and special education; and these trained teachers were the resource-teachers. This project produced positive results such as teachers and students were more receptive to CWSN, a greater number of CWSN received education in regular schools, more teachers received training in integrated education; and, increased awareness among professionals and policy-makers (Sharma and Deppeler, 2005; Rose 2016). In 1992, the NPE (1986) was revised and named as National Programme of Action (POA), 1992; and

> postulated that a child with disability who can be educated in a general school should be educated in a general school only and not in a special school. Even those children who are initially admitted to special schools should be transferred to general schools once they acquire daily living skills, communication skills and basic academic skills. Education of children with disability will be a component in the training of educational planners and administrators as well as preservice and in-service teachers (POA, 1992, p.18).

By 1992, The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) provided a set of standards for rehabilitation professionals; one type of rehabilitation professional being special education teachers (Aruna *et* *al.,* 2016). Around this time two major initiatives launched by the GOI for specifically achieving the goals of universalization of elementary education (UEE) were: District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) in 1994 and Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) in 2000. The DPEP laid special emphasis on the integration of children with mild to moderate disabilities, in line with world trends (Sharma and Das, 2015). One of the vital components of SSA is IE; its' policy of 'zero rejection' mandated that no CWSN could be neglected or denied enrolment on the basis of a disability. The Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Act (1995) a landmark legislation emphasised on inclusion and full participation of CWD in regular schools. It highlighted the need for special education to be seen in the context of mainstream education (Das *et al.,* 2013). However, in actual implementation, educational provisions for CWD were still inadequate, and there was a lack of clarity in the provisions prescribed by the PWD Act (1995) (Das *et al.,* 2013). India is a signatory to the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994); since then, it is noteworthy that there has been a shift in language from integrated education to IE. Singal (2006b) highlights that government programs and organisations such as SSA, NCERT, National Council for Teacher's Education (NCTE) and DPEP have been using the word IE increasingly in their literature. In 2005, a National Curriculum Framework was established which provided the approach, recommendation, and framework for making syllabi, textbooks, and teaching practices within the school education programmes (Johansson, 2014).

The various definitions of the term Special Education Needs (SEN) as evident in the Indian context is detailed in the position paper on the education of CWSN (NCERT, 2006, p.2). First, a child with SEN is defined as a child with disability, namely, visual, hearing, loco-motor, and intellectual (DPEP, 2001). Second, according to a Report of the First Regional Workshop for SAARC Countries (2000, p.58) SEN goes beyond physical disability. It also refers to, "the large proportion of children—in the school age—belonging to the groups of child labour are, street children, victims of natural catastrophes and social conflicts, and those in extreme social and economic deprivation. These children constitute the bulk of dropouts from the school system". Third, when defining SEN, the SSA separates disabilities from other groups like girls, Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and urban-deprived children, it makes provisions for these children under the section on SEN. Finally, the draft paper on the Inclusive Education Scheme (MHRD, 2003), addresses the needs of learners with disabilities and focuses on the following categories of disability: visual disabilities (blind and low vision), speech and hearing disabilities, locomotor disabilities, and neuromusculoskeletal and neuro-developmental disorders, including cerebral palsy, autism, mental retardation, multiple disability, and learning disabilities.

Thus, in the position paper by NCERT (2006) the definition of SEN is quite wide and covers various categories of disabilities, marginalized groups and SC/ST. In 2005, the Action Plan for Inclusion in Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities (IECYD) was drafted which envisioned that all CWD will have access to mainstream education (Johansson, 2014). In order to facilitate this, the GOI specifically suggested collaborating between the RCI and the NCTE to ensure that there were adequate number of teachers trained in IE. This plan specifically suggested the move from integration towards inclusion, and stated that the existing physical infrastructures and teaching methodologies be modified to meet the needs of all children, including CWSN (Aruna *et al.,* 2016). Johansson (2014) conducted a review of different programmes and legislation and concluded that inclusion, integration and mainstreaming are used interchangeably in official documents and in practice by teachers. It is important to note that the IECYD (2005), stated that "an attempt to develop a consensus on the understanding of the concept of inclusive education and achieving it in the Indian context should be made" (Johansson, 2014, p. 1225); thus highlighting the importance of culture and context in the field of IE.

The Right to Education Act (RTE, 2005) was drafted in 2005 by the MHRD, GOI. This came into force in 2009. This Act is not disability-specific, but has sections devoted to the inclusion of CWD (Aruna *et al.,* 2016). According to RTE (2009), CWD have the right to free and compulsory education. It also sets aside 25% of the admission seats in all schools to children from the disadvantaged and weaker sections; and defines these sections to include children disadvantaged due to various factors like linguistic, gender, tribes, caste and community; CWSN or when the income of the parents is lower than a specified limit. While the effects of RTE were inconsistent; it represents a stable commitment from the GOI to move towards a more equitable and inclusive education system. There is a central RTE act, the implementation of which is up to the state governments. In Karnataka, students from the RTE category are to be absorbed in the nearby government schools; if there are no government schools, they are allocated government-aided schools. In the absence of government or aided schools, these children are allotted to private schools. The seat quota to be set aside for the RTE category is 25% and is based on parameters such as evidence of annual income below a certain level, disability or schedule caste and tribes. The government pays 25% of the child's fees to the school.

The IEDSS (2009) launched with the objective of enabling all CWD to pursue further four years of secondary schooling in an inclusive and enabling environment was the first policy that specifically acknowledged the importance of secondary education for PWD. The IEDSS has student-oriented components, such as medical and educational assessment, books and stationery, uniforms, transport allowance, reader allowance, stipend for girls, support services, assistive devices, boarding facility, therapeutic services and teaching-learning materials. Also outlined are other components including the appointment of special education teachers, allowances for general teachers for teaching CWD, teacher training, orientation of school administrators, establishment of resource-room and providing a barrier free environment. The PWD Act (2005) was revised to the RPWD Act (2016), with an emphasis on a rights-based approach to disability. The list of disabilities was expanded from 7 to 21 conditions that included cerebral palsy, speech and language disability, specific learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorders. This act states "every child with benchmark disability between the age of six to eighteen years shall have the right to free education in a neighbourhood school, or in a special school, of his choice" (RPWD, 2016, p.16). The definition of a person with disability (PWD) in the 2016 Act (p.6) is:

> a person with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others.

In the earlier version of this act in 1995, a PWD was defined as 'a person suffering from not less than forty per cent of any disability as certified by a medical authority'. Thus, the RPWD (2016) broadened and brought in a more inclusive definition of disability, by taking into consideration the environment and emphasising 'interaction with barriers'. According to Balakrishnan *et al.,* (2019) the RPWD Act (2016) "provides a holistic view of what the person's disability could comprise, emphasizing not only on biological determinants but also on social, environmental, and relational ones." They also observe that the RPWD Act (2016), reflects a shift from a charity-based model, wherein only what is feasible for the authorities is done for the PWD, to a rights-based model, where the provisions in the Act are mandated. For example, the act dictates that "appropriate government shall ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise the right to access any court, tribunal, authority, commission, or any other body having judicial or quasi-judicial or investigative powers without discrimination based on disability" (Math *et al.,* 2019, p.S810). This is the first act that included right to property for PWD. Anecdotal evidence reveals that at an operational level, non-governmental-organisations (NGO) that work with PWD have become more aware of their rights, advocacy and self-advocacy after the RPWD Act (2016). Universities have dedicated clauses for equal opportunity policy that follow the rules specified by the RPWD Act (2016) (Tezpur University, 2019). The RPWD (2016) uses the term CWD and states that IE will be provided to them. Along with stating that they should be admitted without discrimination, it highlights accessibility, infrastructure and provisions to maximize academic and social development. In doing so it recognizes the importance of social inclusion along with academic inclusion. It also indicates that it is the duty of schools to ensure participation and progress in terms of attainment levels. The act also stipulates that assessment of disability should be done once in 5 years; and outlines the screening, assessment and certification procedures. There is evidence of specific measures to promote IE including teacher training, employing teachers with disability training, establishing resource centres to help institutions, promote and use augmentative modes of teaching and learning such as Braille and sign language and modifications in curriculum and examination system. It is evident that the act seeks to support both mainstream and special schools. This focus on multiple options also improves access to schools and helps in developing skill-based education. The number of out-of-school children aged 6 to 14 years has reduced from 13.46 million in 2006 to 6 million in 2014 (UNICEF, 2018). In Karnataka, according to a government report (GoK, 2019), revitalizing special education has been undertaken to further improve access and strengthen the government schooling system. 77851 students were identified as CWSN from grades-1 to 10. Out of these 70109 were regularly going to schools and School Readiness Program (SRP) centers and 7742 were covered through home-based education. This data would most probably not reflect the number of CWSN enrolled in learning centres that are not registered as schools. Also, a large number of CWD enrol with NIOS as private candidates and are not part of the regular school structure, a fact corroborated by the Government of Karnataka (GoK, 2019). The GoK (2019) report mentions that some steps taken to ensure inclusion of CWSN were – increasing the number of teachers, teacher training curriculum, working closely with various department such as the office of the state commissioner for PWD and partner with NGOs in the area of disabilities.

The most recent Samagra Shiksha, oversees the implementation of the RTE act from pre-school to Class-12. The objectives of this program are “to enable all children and young persons with disabilities to have access to inclusive education and improve their enrolment, retention and achievement in the general education system” (Samagra Shiksha, 2018). This program also focuses on training mainstream-teachers to include CWSN in their classrooms. The National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) is meant to provide an overarching vision and comprehensive framework for both school and higher education across India. The implementation of its proposals depends on further regulations by the government at the states and the centre. Some key proposals in the NEP (2020) are:

- To change the school curricular structure from the current 10+2 starting from 6 years of age to 5+3+3+4 starting at 3 years of age. The existing formal education structure in India starts at 6 years of age, and has a 4 (primary-school) + 3 (middle-school) + 3 (high-school) + 2 (senior-secondary) format. The structure proposed by NEP (2020) suggests 5 (foundation stage) + 3 (preparatory stage) + 3 (middle-school) + 4 (secondary and senior-secondary education) structure, starting at 3 years of age; thus, bringing children from ages 3 to 5 years within the formal education system for the first time, and ensuring curricular continuity in the last four years of high-school.
- A mission for foundational literacy and numeracy, free breakfasts being added to free lunches in government schools, vocational education along with internships from Class-6, and proposed redesign of the board examinations.
- All stand-alone Teachers Education Institutions to offer only four years integrated B.Ed. programmes by 2030.
- All schools that have foundation, preparatory, middle and secondary level should appoint 4-years integrated B.Ed. degree holders as teachers with dual major specialization education and another subject area.

Summarizing, educational legislation in India has made significant progress resulting in legislations such as the SSA (2000, 2007 and 2017), RTE (2005 and 2009), RPWD Act (2016) and NEP (2020). Some of the specific changes this has brought about are the concept of IE and zero rejection policy in school, a right to compulsory and free education for children 6 to 14 years and recognition of more disabilities for provisions both in education and employment. Significantly the RPWD (2016) moves the focus of disability from the medical model to a social model. The recent NEP (2020) proposes to bring changes in the academic structure and provisions in school; and at the teacher training level.

2.3 Schooling and teacher training: providing for children with special needs in India

India has mainstream schools and special schools that follow one or more of the boards of education mentioned in Section 2.2 (Hodkinson and Devarakonda, 2009; Rose *et al.,* 2021). Across the country there are special schools for different disabilities such as the visually impaired, speech impaired and intellectually disabled. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment provides grant to various NGOs that run these schools. The RCI had estimated around 2500 special schools in India (Singal, 2006b). There were a million schools of all types, out of which 2500 were special schools largely run by NGOs (The Seventh All India Education Survey (2009) in Jha, 2010). A review of literature did not yield more recent statistical data on this. Children with mild to moderate SEN who typically are able to complete formal schooling with support in school and outside school through private tuitions, are seen in mainstream schools. Some schools have a policy of inclusion and enroll children with the knowledge that these children have special needs. There are learning centers that coach children to take the secondary exams as private candidates. All boards of education provide accommodations and provisions for CWSN including additional time to write the paper, provision of a reader, scribe or prompter, choice of subjects, calculator, and exemption from second and third language subjects.

The NCTE (2018, p.7) lays down the minimum qualifications for teachers in the country for all schools as follows:

Grades-1 to 5 – Senior Secondary with a Diploma in Elementary Education from an organization recognized by NCTE and a pass in the Teacher Eligibility Test conducted by NCTE in accordance with the state.

Grades-6 to 8 – Graduate and Bachelor’s Degree in Education (B.Ed.,) from an organization recognized by NCTE and a pass in the Teacher Eligibility Test.

Grade-9 and 10 - Graduate and B.Ed., from an organization recognized by NCTE.

Graduate teacher training or B.Ed., as it is known in India, continues to have only one or two theory-based subjects in education of CWD, and in some universities, these are offered as optional subjects. Sharma and Das (2015) cite several studies by researchers that draw attention to a reformation and redrafting of teacher education programmes in India. Das *et al.,* (2013) state that there is a lack of teacher training with respect to IE in India, and teachers with some training in it have difficulties in putting what has been learnt into practice. Bansal (2016) agrees that teacher training programs are theory-based and have little practical opportunities to observe the practice and implementation of IE. Similar insights about the lack of skill building through practicum and lack of practical exposure were reached by Kumari *et al.,* (2019) in their analysis of B.Ed., programmes across 15 universities. In this context it is heartening to note small but significant changes creeping in at the ground level in India. The instance in Vignette 2#1, from a report by the Government of Karnataka (GoK, 2019) showcases the success of multiple options available for inclusion in India, and importance of attitudes of teachers.

Vignette 2#1

> *Syed Khan, a government school teacher in a rural area, who completed his training in special education (sponsored by the government), says that the biggest challenge he faced was parental reluctance to send their CWSN to school. One of the initial steps he took to overcome that obstacle was to provide care to children in their homes. Gradually, he was able to convince parents to send their children to schools for multiple therapies such as physio, speech and play. This he said, helped him build rapport between parents, community and school; and has also created a strong parent support network. Children with severe disabilities continued to receive home-based support. Rajendra, a student who is speech and hearing impaired shared that being with other students without SEN in the same classroom helped his overall development. Syed also mentions that the focus on special education has resulted in an increase in overall learning levels of all students as teachers were more aware and adapt their teaching styles to address all learners in the class (GoK, 2019).*

2.4 Challenges of inclusion in India

Every country has its unique challenges and some that are universal in nature, in making education accessible for all and in making IE a reality. India too has its own share of challenges. India is diverse in several aspects including culture, socio-economic status, traditions and languages. This along with the pressures of population result in some communities and groups running into the risk of being excluded. The SSA suggest that schools should be accessible to all children, and one of its focus areas are ‘the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes, children with special needs and other disadvantaged groups’ (SSA, 2017, p.17). According to Aruna *et al.,* (2016) there are many accessibility challenges for CWSN. Disparity between the need for and availability of services in the rural and urban areas is distinctive in India. While 75% of PWD live in rural India, less than 15% of national services for PWD are located in rural areas, and of those, most are expensive and sometimes private (Aruna *et al.,* 2016). The type and severity of disability influences the extent of inclusion of the child. People are discriminated against based on their type of disability (Aruna *et al.,* 2016). In a study by Bhatnagar and Das (2014) conducted in Delhi with 500 teachers, it was found that secondary-school teachers were more willing to have children with social difficulties in their classrooms than those with physical limitations. Singal (2006a) opines that heads of schools in Delhi shared that some disabilities such as ‘blindness, physical problems and mild learning disabilities’ were more ‘socially acceptable’ and hence easier to include. Sharma and Das (2015) based on a study of 8 schools, also found that the type and severity of disability had an impact on admission into mainstream schools; and that, children who looked different physically and had low intellectual abilities were denied admission. Some teachers feel that children who need physical accommodations are easier to include, because they don’t have any other behavioural issues.

A core challenge at the national policy level according to Sharma and Das (2015) is that disability in India is primarily driven by the individual or medical model. Policies focus on identification of disability, providing funds and resources and classifying the disability. A contrasting view is that this focus on the disability and the individual is important, especially when less than 5% of CWD have joined the school system (Singal, 2006a). For example, one common opinion that is shared by parents of school-going girls in India, is the lack of segregated toilets for girls, especially in government schools or schools in rural areas. In a later study Singal (2019) reports that the enrollment figures of CWD had risen sharply to 95.33%; however, this was only at the pre-primary and primary levels through home-based and school readiness programmes. On a similar note, Kundu and Rice (2020) mention that the number of children who are out-of-school was higher in children with intellectual disabilities, speech impairments and multiple disabilities. The transition levels to upper primary and above (Class-2 and above) continued to be very low. Also, significant disparities were found according to type of disparity; children with autism and cerebral palsy were less likely to be enrolled in school. Shah *et al.,* (2016) in a study based on 560 teachers in Ahmedabad found that infrastructure resources was the topmost concern amongst teachers in their study and several other studies in India. National policies discuss changes in infrastructure, resources and access and allocation of funds for the same. While this is very important, it has also been argued that not much has happened at the ground level in terms of changes in social systems, institutional contexts and teacher training (Sharma and Das, 2015; Singal, 2006b; Johannsson, 2014). The common view in schools is that CWD should adjust to the general school system. Singal (2006a) in her study based on 13 schools, out of which 11 were private, observes that none of the heads spoke about preparation undertaken at a school level to facilitate the transition of a child; however, they spoke about equipping the child with skills to fit into the school system.

One of the critical factors in the success of an inclusive approach (defined in Section 3.5.4) is the training, attitude and perception of teachers. This can be a challenge for inclusive practice as teachers in mainstream schools feel they are not equipped and trained to teach CWSN. Anecdotal evidence reveals that teachers feel that when there are CW&WOSN in the same classroom, they are not able to do justice to either set of children. Rose (2016) based on several studies in India report that training teachers towards a more inclusive system is an area of concern. Shah *et al.,* (2016) based on several studies in India also conclude that teachers do not feel competent enough in meeting the needs of CWD. The paradigm shift to an inclusive approach (defined in Section 3.5.4) that ensures equity and access to all children when well-implemented benefits all children and not only those with SEN, is yet to happen in India (Sharma and Das, 2015). Training in special education is the responsibility of the RCI (Sawhney, 2015). RCI is an independent body and has no collaborations with NCTE, which is the central agency for teacher training. As explained in Section 2.3, teacher training courses in India do not cover special education and inclusive approaches in great detail. Besides this there is also a shortage of trained personnel including teachers, special-educators, assistant teachers and therapists (Sharma and Das, 2015). While the minimum qualifications for teachers have been stipulated (Section 2.3), there are challenges in implementing these. In rural and semi-urban areas, trained teachers are not always available due to several factors such as reluctance from teachers due to insufficient housing, medical facilities, problems in transport for teachers to reach school and social and growth opportunities (Rose *et al.,* 2021, Johansson *et al.,* 2021). Though English is the medium of instruction in many teacher training courses, the quality of instruction changes depending on where the courses are conducted. For example, a course offered in a small town in India, would need the instructor to translate many terms from English into the local language, in order to reach out to all teachers. While this may not always result in diluting the content, many times it creates a range of linguistic challenges, because instructors who are fluent with the course content in English may not be as fluent in the local language. When these newly trained teachers who may be good at the subject teach in schools, they may not be able to adapt and differentiate to reach all diverse learners. A focus on the completion of curriculum, lack of a differential curriculum and examination-driven approach are some of the other challenges that are faced by teachers. At the classroom level, India presents some unique challenges such as large class strength (classes with 45 children is quite typical in India) and resources; a fact corroborated in the SSA Evaluation Report, 2010 (Sharma and Das, 2015; Sawhney, 2015).

A significant challenge in India is that a CWD brings in an additional economic cost in the family such as cost of therapy and additional infrastructure. There is an over-representation of PWD amongst people living in poverty (Singal, 2019; Aruna *et al.,* 2016), and cost of addressing the disability adds to poverty. Sharma and Deppeler (2005) mention that a combination of poverty and disability leads to 'simultaneous deprivation'. Singal (2019) suggests that a CWD incurs a significant economic cost on the family unit. Aruna *et al.,* (2016) based on the term 'conversion handicap' coined by Amartya Sen explains that PWD may have extra expenses such as regular maintenance of a wheelchair for a child who needs one, and regular paid therapy sessions for a child on the ASD spectrum. One of the consequences of poverty is 'deprivation of individual choices and opportunities' (Sen, 1999 in Singal, 2019, p.835). This may occur due to various factors such as insufficient knowledge of schemes available, lack of awareness of education as a tool for development and lack of role models amongst communities who would motivate families to a range of opportunities. The GOI has made efforts to address this and runs scholarships schemes for CWD; however, a numerical figure of children benefitting from these schemes is not available (Singal, 2019).

Finally, as a result of lack of representation from children and parents, comprehensive inclusion in India is limited. In general, there is a lack of representation of CWSN and their experiences in classrooms is missing from literature (Rose and Shevlin, 2017); and a limited number of studies on role models and representations (Singal, 2019; Srivastava *et al.,* 2015). Therefore, it is important that an insight is sought into what children have to say about their experiences and use such narratives to enhance feedback into the school system in India. There is growing awareness amongst parents on disability, importance of schooling and the importance of parental involvement in a child's education. There also is significantly less literature around parent's voices in this field (Singal, 2019). Despite this and the introduction of the RPWD Act (2016) that endorses the right of all CWD to education, a rights-based approach towards education is not dominant. This may be because of the predominantly social justice-based approach towards education and disability; as can be seen in the GOI's focus on increasing access to education (Singal, 2019). Typical urban private schools do not take inputs from parents and child when the Individualized Education plan (IEP) is being written by the teacher. Empowering parents could enhance the IE process, and can be seen as bottom-up approach in implementing policies (Srivastava *et al.,* 2015). For example, a proactive parent support group formed under the aegis of KET, a special school in Bengaluru, was instrumental in introducing the exemption of second language at the Pre-University level for students with SEN in the state of Karnataka in the early 2000s. Since then, students with a certificate of learning disability have been able to avail of second language exemption at the senior-secondary examination of the Karnataka state board. Thus, challenges to inclusion in India arise from its cultural and socio-economic diversity. The type and severity of disability affects the inclusion of the child. The identification of disability to avail of provisions draws the focus back to the individual, thus moving away from the social model of disability. Training of teachers and the lack of IE and SEN as core concept in teacher training courses have an impact on the preparedness and attitudes of teachers. There also is lack of representation of important stakeholders such as parents and CWD in policy-making and literature.

2.5 Chapter summary

In recent years the GOI has been committed to equalising opportunities to all children, including those with SEN. While legislation lays emphasis on schools being restructured to meet the need of children, the focus seems to be more on the physical settings. The focus now needs to shift towards improving all educational services, which is likely to have more impact on education for CWSN as well. Amongst the priority areas should be training of classroom teachers for inclusive approaches and providing high-quality education for all. In addition to this, regular schools should also have special-educators, and related service professionals. India has a uniquely different culture and socio-economic context, and knowledge on IE approaches from other countries need to be reflected in the light of this context.

Chapter 3 – Literature Review

Inclusion and IE has several dimensions, in this chapter I examine literature on development of inclusion in other countries and the conceptual models of inclusion. I also present briefly the different ways in which disability has been conceptualized. Finally, terms such as inclusion, inclusive school and SEN that are the central points of this study were also explored in literature; and are defined with regard to this study.

3. 1 Defining inclusion

A purposeful sampling of literature was taken up to understand the development of inclusion. The RQs helped me arrive at keywords such as inclusion, inclusive education, exclusion, SEN and disabilities. This search revealed a few conceptual models of inclusion over a span of two decades as summarized in Table 3.1. A few initial observations on these different classifications are: the emphasis on inclusion as a place, and as a process (Florian, 2014); the scope of inclusion widening from CWSN to including all children who may have a need for additional services (Ainscow and César, 2006); exclusion and participation as aspects of inclusion (Görannson and Nilholm, 2014); inclusion from different perspectives - individual versus organizational (Norwich, 2002; Qvortrup and Qvortrup, 2017), special education versus general education (Norwich, 2002); and inclusion at different levels (Qvortrup and Qvortrup, 2017).

While the context and culture differ between countries, the development of education and the endeavour towards making education accessible for all and including all learners is a goal for many countries including India. A review of literature helped in understanding the development of inclusion in other countries and how schools implemented it. Norwich's (2002) classification emphasizes on the placement of the child and starts with a full inclusion model where the diverse needs of all students are accommodated in a regular classroom without any additional legislation,

Source: Norwich (2002)	**Source: Ainscow and César (2006)**	**Source: Göransson and Nilholm (2014)**	**Source: Florian (2014)**	**Source: Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017)**
• Full non-separatist inclusion • Participation in the same place • Focus on individual need • Elective inclusion	Inclusion as • concerned with disability and SEN • a response to disciplinary exclusion • about all groups that are vulnerable to exclusion • a promotion of a school for all • education for all	• Placement definition • Specified individualized definition • General individualized definition • Community definition	• Person-centered approach • Special education practice • School improvement approach	Three dimensions of inclusion • Levels • Arenas • Degrees

Table 3.1: Models of Inclusion

curricula, support systems and separate classes. Any additional or special provision is seen as stigmatizing and excluding. The next two models in this classification focus on meeting individual needs of children either in the classroom itself; or by having a short-term provision in a separate setting. The separate setting is justified on grounds such as short-term provision might help in long-term participation. The fourth mode of elective inclusion considers the preference of the parents for the setting, thus inviting the parents to have direct control of their child's education. This classification focuses on the individual SEN and the overtones from various other inclusionary and exclusionary factors are minimal. Norwich (2002) asserts that special education and general education cannot exist without one another. As part of inclusive practices, arrangements can be made such that most children benefit. For example, instead of only a paper and pencil assessment, other means such as group projects and oral presentations can be included. However, children also need to write and this needs to be encouraged for many of them. Children may have difficulties in writing due to various reasons such as issues in motor skill development, impaired vision, language issues or lower cognitive abilities leading to difficulty in memory and recall. While accommodations maybe made as part of inclusive practices for a scribe, or for reading into a device, a child who has language issues may need a translator and a child with a lower cognitive ability may need a completely different accommodation. According to Norwich (2002, p.485), ‘once it is conceded that some learning arrangements required by a minority are not needed by the majority, then dedicated or specialized mainstream support systems are admitted for some’.

Ainscow and César, (2006) trace IE in the decade after the Salamanca Agreement of 1994. Their analysis on the history of special education provision in many countries reveal that separate special schools had been set up by religious or philanthropic organizations to respond to CWD, and in the 1970s and 1980s there was a movement towards integrating and mainstreaming these children from a human rights perspective. There was also a shift in thinking about disabilities and difficulties in learning from being within the child (medical model) to being a consequence of school systems not providing or responding to all learners (social model). This interpretation was based upon the pioneering work of academicians and disability activists such as Oliver; and Shakespeare and Watson who had for many years challenged the deficit models that dominated interpretations of disability. Hence attention was on reorganizing school structures, pedagogy and teaching and learning methods. The typology suggested by Ainscow and César (2006) pays attention to the individual needs of children and school systems. It starts with inclusion as concerned with disability and SEN, followed by behavioural concerns of students and the exclusionary pressures stemming from that. The next three models in this typology focus on social inclusion of children. Special attention was paid to children who may be vulnerable to exclusion due to factors including socio-economical ones. It then moves on to conceptualizing school as a school for all. This classification, on the positive side acknowledges that SEN and exclusion may result due to other reasons besides disabilities, and that social structures and processes contribute to exclusion. The disadvantage of this model was that in an effort to make school a platform for everybody’s learning, the support needed to address the diverse and specific needs of children was not addressed. When inclusion is defined as education for all, then disability becomes part of diversity such as ethnicity, gender and socio-economic advantage. While each of these need to be addressed, CWD do have their own specific needs which may not get addressed. This in effect oversimplified the differences between the various facets of diversity (Shakespeare, 2006 in Norwich, 2014). There is also a risk that CWD may be overlooked when pursuing other categories that need to be addressed (Norwich, 2014). For example, in Norway while ‘the school for all’ movement disbanded most segregated schools and focused on creating a strong Norwegian identity, the common school was not strengthened to value differences (Ainscow and César, 2006).

Göransson and Nilholm (2014) emphasise on the social and academic aspects of inclusion while discussing the conceptual diversities of IE. One of the four inclusion criteria for their research was ‘clear indicators of inclusion encompassing social and academic effects’ (Göransson and Nilholm, 2014, p.267). Their classification of inclusion dwells on placement of CWD in mainstream classrooms, meeting the social and academic needs of CWD and creating communities with specific characteristics such as equity, justice and valuing diversity. In effect, from an emphasis on CWD in the first two categories in this model it moves on to emphasis on all learners in the last two categories. In evaluating the social inclusion aspect, they note that data for this was seldom obtained from children themselves, it was mainly obtained from teachers. Rose and Shevlin (2017) also state that less attention has been given to the experiences of CWSN in mainstream schools. Inclusion is about children being included in the school system, and their input would make data authentic, however this process has challenges. Children may not have the ability to narrate or talk; or they may not be willing to share their experiences. When children are willing and can share their experiences, they may not understand the intent of the research completely. With some children with difficulties, this problem maybe exaggerated, leading to flawed data (Rose and Shevlin, 2017). However, data may be gained by other methods such as observation; or other forms of non-traditional research methods such as drawings.

Florian (2014) highlights the divergent approaches to inclusion in different countries. In the 1990s, Canada education authorities advocated the person-centered approach, where human differences were celebrated as a resource to be valued; rather than being seen as a deficit. A notable change here was that, though it was person-centered, the focus was on empowering the child and not fixing the deficit. On the contrary, the UK moved towards school improvement, where the focus was on improving school practices; and a shift from focusing on differences between learners. Around the same time, in the USA, the principle of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) was being explored. LRE suggests that a disabled child's education should happen in the classroom or school he or she would attend if not disabled. The goal of LRE is to ensure that CWSN are educated with their peers to the most possible extent (Kirby, 2017). LRE supports the idea of inclusion as a place, which could be mainstream classroom, resource-room, or a segregated classroom in a mainstream school; and sometimes special school. However, it also conceptualizes inclusion as a service – by extending special education services to mainstream in the form of individualized learning and the use of learning support assistants. The IEP teams determine the LRE for each student keeping both academic and behavioural goals in mind (Lemons *et al.,* 2018). In the Indian context, while the government policies mention IE, they do not specifically say how it should be implemented; hence, different models of inclusion are prevalent (Section 3.5). Florian (2014) terms this as an approach based on special education practice. In the UK, the word 'engagement in learning' emerged, which preferred a learning concept of inclusion, which is about 'including all children in the common educational enterprise of learning, wherever they learn best' (Norwich, 2014, p.498). In this view the emphasis is on learning than on placement. In all the models discussed there is one common thread – when difference is pointed out there is a probability of being labelled and segregated; and when sameness has to be maintained, the risk is diversity may not be addressed (Reindal, 2016; Terzi, 2005b; Florian, 2014; Ainscow and César, 2006).

Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017) provide a definition of inclusion with a focus on inclusion and exclusion based on a system of dimensions of inclusion. The theoretical basis for these dimensions of inclusion is the sociological systems theory developed in the 1980s and 1990s by the German sociologist Luhmann, and a brief introduction is given here based on Qvortrup and Qvortrup's (2017) paper. Luhmann describes modern society as functionally differentiated systems such as economics, law, science and education. There is a system-specific code that conditions the operations and communications of these. The communication in education is based on new knowledge of the education system and what children need to learn to participate in society. Luhmann also helps in specifying a direction for the question of what children (should) learn by participating in IE. Each system is divided into communities, and people are free to move around in these communities, hence are constantly being included or excluded. An important aspect of inclusion are the causes of exclusion. To an extent, all of us are included in some activities but not in some. For example, we are invited to some parties but are not to others; when we apply to be part of some club or some event, based on the criteria, we may be accepted or rejected, or in other words included or excluded; and acceptance to higher levels of education or entry into specific programmes is based on a combination of cognitive and socio-emotional criteria and tests. Similarly, in school there are formal and informal clubs, academic and otherwise. Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017, p.7) summarize that "the inclusion and exclusion processes in school to a great extent correspond to or resemble the inclusion and exclusion processes in a society". Norwich (2014, p.496) concurs that IE is 'not an end in itself, but a means to inclusive society'. Hence looking at these aspects is a way of preparing children to be part of society.

Inclusion is a dynamic process. Right from the time a child enters school, there are multiple spaces that a child encounters – school bus, the hallways, the classroom, playground and lunch hall. Interactions happen with multiple people in different settings – such as between child and teacher, amongst children of a class and between children of different grades. And in these myriad spaces, and with different people, the quality or the extent to which a child is included is varied. Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017) bring in these factors and the systems theory together and propose a definition based on three dimensions: levels of inclusion, arenas of inclusion and degrees of inclusion. A child can be included at the numeric level – which is being physically included; social level – where the focus is on the student being part of the learning and social activities; and the psychological level – which is the students' point of view, does he feel included, is there a 'sense of belonging'. For example, if a child who is part of an art team, is only asked to fetch supplies all the time, does he feel included and part of the team. Or does a child in a class of 35 others, who is never invited to any birthday party that happens outside the school, feel included in the classroom?

The second dimension, arenas of inclusion is the different communities that the child is part of. There are different social arenas in a school such as peer relations, formal / informal clubs in the classroom and in the school, social system in the bus and student-teacher systems. Achievement and educational efficiency are the arenas in this model, and measuring appropriate learning outcomes is an important criterion. When a child in the previous example does not get invited to any birthday party, he is being excluded from one social arena outside the class, whereas he still is part of the group in the class. The third dimension is the degree to which a child is included. A child whose participation in the art period is limited to fetching material for an art project; a child who is pulled-out for a 15-minute session of reading with a teacher one-on-one - do these instances count as full inclusion? Or is it varying degrees of inclusion? Thus, a child may not be completely included or excluded, the extent or degree varies. For example: a child who is good in sports and exhibits difficulties in academic skills may experience a higher degree of inclusion on the sports field than in the classroom. Similarly, a child who is academically proficient with limited social skills may not feel included in the classroom or the sports field; but may experience some degree of inclusion when interacting with teachers. And a child who is above the class average in sports, academics and music; may feel included in many arenas (teachers and friends) and spaces. The extremes of inclusion being total inclusion where a child experiences a sense of being completely included at all levels (physical, social and psychological); all arenas and relations. Or the converse where a child is excluded from all activities of the school and all relationships that exist in a school. Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017) dimensions of inclusion help in capturing the continuum on which inclusion happens.

Thus, inclusion can span from full inclusion in the mainstream to being pulled-out for some special education classes when conceptualized in terms of place; in terms of services, it could span from focusing on the individual to improving or enhancing the practices in a school to include all learners. Inclusion not only includes CWSN, but also includes all groups vulnerable to exclusion. Inclusion is a continuum and happens along various dimensions – levels, arenas and degrees.

3.2 Conceptualizing disability

There broadly is a consensus that most models of inclusion reject the medical model and advocate a social model (Ainscow and César, 2006; Terzi, 2005a; Florian, 2014; Kirby, 2017). The capabilities approach developed by Sen and Nussbaum acts as a bridge between these two models (Terzi, 2005a; Reindal, 2016).

3.2.1 The medical or individual model

The medical model also known as the deficit model or individual model, proposes that the disability is within the child; as a deficit or a flaw within the child. This model does not pay attention to the factors in the child's environment that may exacerbate this deficit. For example, children who have difficulty in writing would be at a disadvantage in a situation which needs them to write, such as copying from the board in a stipulated time. However, if the educational system is designed in such a way that minimizes this need, the child might not be at a disadvantage. This is where the importance of the medical model steps in, if an alternate provision needs to be made, the diagnosis of difficulty is important. However, from my experience and literature, the inability of the child in writing is quite often classified as a SEN, that needs special provisions regardless of the situation that highlighted the need. According to Kirby (2017), this model is used by policy-makers as justification to have special education separately to remediate the perceived weakness in the child. The child is diagnosed, a label is given to the child, and services are provided to remediate the same leading to a strong case of dedicated special education services (Kirby, 2017). Kirby (2017, p.177) argues that “in the medical model students are diagnosed and receive services to ameliorate a deficit. Special education is used as a tool to fix the deficit”. On a similar note, disability scholars such as Oliver, Shakespeare and Finkelstein agree that “disability is considered mainly a target of treatment and rehabilitation intended to achieve as much as possible an approximation to normality” (Terzi, 2005a, p.200). Terzi (2005a) also differentiated between impairment and disability. Impairment is a physiological disorder; and the resulting disability is more fundamental and is seen as a restriction of activity. According to WHO impairment is an ‘abnormality in the structure or the functioning of the body’ whether due to disease or trauma, disability as the ‘restriction in the ability to perform tasks due to impairment’ (Terzi, 2005a, p.199). For instance, according to Terzi (2005a) a hearing impairment can become a disability when accommodations in teaching are not made. I opine that a medical model has its purpose in determining an impairment and in determining the organizational changes that are needed to ensure that the needs arising out of those impairments are met.

3.2.2 The social model

The social model was mainly developed by Oliver (1996) and his colleagues and has its basis in the experiences and reflections of disabled people and scholars (Terzi, 2005a). This model dismisses the notion that disability is only within the child. In the social model, disability is socially constructed (Kirby, 2017; Terzi, 2005a; Norwich, 2014). Shakespeare and Watson (1997) add that internal differences are relatively minor. According to Oliver (1996) in Terzi (2005a, p.201), ‘the social model does not deny the problem of disability but locates it squarely within society’. This model has different definitions of impairment and disability which are ‘impairment is lacking part or all of a limb, or having a defective limb, organ or mechanism of the body’, and “disability is the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organization which takes no or little account of people with impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities” (Terzi, 2005a, p.201). Oliver suggests that ‘disability is a construct imposed on a reality where there is only difference’ (Terzi, 2005a, p.201). The central question in this model is how do we make school a place where all children can learn, regardless of their need. The inflexibility of the school systems and their inability to meet the diversity of children causes special educational needs (Terzi, 2005b). According to Norwich (2014), IE has its basis in this model. Proponents of the social model argue that disabilities and constructed labels devalue children and segregate them leading to exclusion (Terzi, 2005b). Disability scholars including Morris and Wendell promote the celebration of disability as a difference and an aspect of human diversity (Terzi, 2005a). Critiques of social model say that the impairment and personal experience cannot be ignored; whereas proponents of this model say that including that would dilute the model (Shakespeare and Watson, 1997). It is evident therefore that the environment and climate in school are important aspects of the inclusion of a child. For example, when a child whose spoken English is poor is in a class where English is the predominant medium of interaction and instruction. The child’s inability to interact in English can be taken as a challenge and strategies can be adopted to make the child feel accepted. However, changes cannot be made only at the system and structures level; the fact that the child does not know English needs to be addressed too.

In this context, the term ‘barriers to learning and participation’ introduced by Booth and Ainscow (2002) is relevant. According to Norwich (2014), this term was an alternate word for SEN in line with the social model. This has two important implications - barriers to learning maybe external or internal to the child (Norwich, 2014). In many cases barriers are external to the child, as in the arrangement of a classroom for a child with sensory issues; or providing reading support to a child with reading difficulty. However, it is important to note that barriers could be internal or within the child too – the child with sensory issues may really have a low threshold towards noise, and hence ear muffs may help; or it may be important to directly address the reading difficulty of the child to hasten the process of inclusion.

While the medical model proposes additional services to help a CWD, the social model propounds inclusivity or modification of existing school structures to address all children. However, the social model does not deny access to specialist services or resources such as therapists, or wheelchairs. As Norwich (2002) succinctly says, if what is generally provided for most children covers what a CWD requires, there is no need for additionality. That is high levels of inclusivity will reduce the need for additionality. Purists of the social model resist all attempts towards any additional provision. However, inherently inclusivity is a response to including diverse learners and hence additionality cannot be avoided. For example, to respond to the needs of a class of diverse learners, the needs of all children should be known; and if a CWSN is to be part of a classroom, then the details of the classroom and its organization need to be known.

I agree with Norwich's (2002, p.494) statement "an individual model cannot exist outside the context of the social, as a social model cannot exist without reference to individual". Inclusion has been defined as a process of learning and participation by Booth and Ainscow (2002). When attention is not given to the school systems, then inclusion becomes a matter of being physically present and stays limited to the placement of the child in the mainstream environment. To reduce barriers to learning and participation, the individual needs of the children should be considered to make the classroom and school more accessible. The medical model emphasizes on adjustment of individual and does not pay much attention to the changes in the environment where the individual functions. In part the social model while paying attention to the associated environment does not pay much attention to the existing impairment and disability.

This statement sums up the medical and social model effectively:

> Disability studies needs to pay attention to the distress caused by people's experience of social disablement (Keith, 1996), and indeed it has been argued that we need also to explore the impact of impairment itself (Crow, 1996) (in Shakespeare and Watson, 1997, p.297).

The capabilities approach helps in addressing in part the inherent difficulties in the medical and social models, by looking at disabilities based on functionings and capabilities. As Shakespeare and Watson, (1997, p.296) argue:

> Disabled people’s functional capacities have to be placed in a broader social and environmental context, which can incorporate issues such as disabling barriers, availability of aids and personal assistance, and financial and material factors.

3.2.3 The capabilities approach

Terzi (2005a, 2005b) has discussed Amartya Sen’s capability approach at length. Capability approach is a normative framework for assessment of poverty, inequality and design of social institutions based on functionings and capabilities. Functionings are beings and doings that individuals have reason to value like reading, writing and walking. Capabilities are opportunities people have in order to achieve these functionings. Insights from Sen’s approach that help in disability and SEN studies are:

- Human diversity is not secondary in understanding equality
- Humans are different in gender, age, physical and mental abilities and talents
- Human heterogeneity encompasses external factors such as economic, social and cultural.

When inclusion is seen as development of capabilities, it applies to all children, without distinguishing between general education and special education (Reindal, 2016). Reindal (2016) highlights that academic success and community building have been the reasons for implementing inclusion. One of the aims of IE undoubtedly is to improve human values and ensure all children flourish. Reindal (2016) suggests that the capabilities approach may serve as an ethical framework for this. Therefore, “inclusion is seen as the development of capabilities, not just for children with impairments and difficulties, but for all children” (Reindal, 2016, p.7). In doing so, the divide between mainstream and special education will cease to exist. Terzi (2010) in Reindal (2016, p.7) indicates that in the capabilities approach emphasis is on equality and quality of provision and not of location. The emphasis is on increasing the opportunities available, which in turn will lead to capability equality and children who would be able to achieve their functionings. Since the focus is on the individual and in enhancing provisions, it does not take away the attention from the child, nor does it underestimate the importance of the environment. Hence, schools and their policies are very important. For example, a child who is restless, and is unable to sit in a classroom for more than 5 minutes. He does not have a difficulty in understanding instructions from the teacher or following what happens in the class; but is unable to read or write at the times that the class is doing such tasks. The medical model will probably classify him on the spectrum of ADHD after a detailed screening. And attribute his restlessness and inability to sit in class due his impairment which is ADHD. The argument of the social model would be that classrooms are designed in such a way that restricts the movement of children and curb their natural tendencies, and the restlessness is a consequence of that. The capability approach would view reading and writing as functioning. To enable this child to read and write, opportunities such as preferential seating and timed breaks need to be arranged. The extent to which he can read and write depends on the opportunities given to him to convert his resources into functionings. Unlike the individual model it does not dwell only on the within child factors; and unlike the social model it does not overlook the within-child factors while focusing only on the systemic changes required. Summarizing the three approaches, the medical model focuses on the disability of the child, and does not pay attention to the environmental factors. A diagnosis of the SEN is needed to avail provisions in schools for special education services; however, the contributing factors in the environment should also be addressed. The social model treats disability as an aspect of human diversity, and focuses on making changes in the environment of the child in order to improve participation in mainstream. The capabilities approach looks at disabilities based on functionings and capabilities. It focuses on increasing opportunities available to children to achieve their functionings, and in the process develop their capabilities.

3.3 Inclusive school

The definition of a school that is inclusive (referred to as inclusive school henceforth) is not straightforward. Florian (2019) states that in economically-advantaged countries, an inclusive school 'may be a specially designated mainstream school that is additionally resourced to include children with disabilities'. McLeskey *et al.,* (2014) conducted a study on an inclusive elementary school in the USA which was considered inclusive due to the number of students with disabilities in the classroom and the achievement levels for CWSN - both parameters were more than the national and state averages. They report that there was little evidence of schools that achieved excellent academic outcome for CW&WOSN in highly inclusive settings in the USA. Farrell *et al.,* (2007) (in McLeskey *et al.,* 2014, p.59) conducted 12 case studies on schools that were considered highly inclusive and effective across grade levels. These 12 schools were identified as being inclusive firstly because they enrolled a large number of students with SEN relative to other characteristics of the school population and secondly had positive academic outcomes on national assessment instruments. They identified common characteristics amongst those schools including:

> (a) schools were welcoming and supportive of all students, (b) educating students with disabilities was accepted by teachers as part of their typical activities, (c) schools emphasized raising the achievement levels of all students, (d) tracking systems were used to monitor individual student progress, (e) instructional practices were recognizably good across classrooms, (f) appropriate levels of resources were used efficiently and effectively, and (g) resources were used flexibly to support student needs.

In addition to the above characteristics, McLeskey *et al.,* (2014) found that inclusive schools emphasised on professional development of teachers and shared decision-making with teachers. Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017, p.4) list the following similar key qualities and components in identifying inclusive schools after surveying a significant corpus of literature:

> (1) a clear vision focusing on all children and supported by the whole group of school personnel, (2) all children are valued members within classrooms and are educated together, (3) comprehensive support for both children and teachers, (4) a collaborative team approach at the schools, (5) flexible curricula and high-quality instruction using evidence-based approaches, (6) supportive leadership that includes shared decision-making and, (7) focus on quality professional development.

A comparison of the above studies reveals that Mcleskey *et al.,* (2014) and Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017) suggest that inclusive schools a) value and focus on all children; b) instructional practices, support to teachers, development of resources was important; and 3) attach importance to achievement of all children, and systems to track progress in both academic and social terms. These are important factors because of the need to ensure that schools are seen as effective teaching and learning environments and are doing more than simply retaining students as part of the overall school population. Studies by Farrell *et al.,* (2007) in McLeskey *et al.,* (2014) also consider the attitude of classroom-teachers in considering CWSN as part of their classroom in the process of inclusion. This moves the focus from special education to an inclusive classroom approach. Additionally, McLeskey *et al.,* (2014) and Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017) emphasise a collaborative team approach and shared leadership among the important characteristics of inclusive schools; an aspect not mentioned in the studies by Farrell *et al.,* (2007) in McLeskey *et al.,* (2014); and is indeed an organizational aspect that depends on the style of leadership followed in schools, and to some extent a cultural aspect too.

3.4 Special education needs (SEN)

Quite like the term inclusion, the term SEN too is a term that has various definitions. Since provisions in most countries are dependent on identification and assessment of SEN, a process that is not straightforward (Banks *et al.,* 2012; Florian 2019), the definition of SEN and the various categories in it are important in any study of inclusion. The UNESCO guide (2017, p.7) defines SEN as ‘a term used in some countries to refer to children with impairments that are seen as requiring additional support’. Florian (2019, p.693) defines:

> a child or young person is commonly considered to have ‘special needs’ if he or she has a learning difficulty and/or a disability that requires support that is additional from, or different to that which is ordinarily available to others of similar age.

She explains that disability, learning difficulty and learning disability are umbrella terms. The word learning difficulty in this context includes specific difficulties such as dyslexia; it also means difficulties in learning due to other factors such as environmental conditions and cultural factors. In many European countries and the USA identification determines where the child is placed and the degree of support the child gets. For example, in Belgium, where there are segregated special schools, the statement of special needs given after assessment by Centres for Pupils’ Counselling determines the referral to a special school or learning support in an integrated school (Lebeer *et al.,* 2010). Ireland follows a 3-step identification process, where the first two steps are based on identification by the teacher; psychological assessment is done in the third step when school-based interventions have failed, and a more intensive assessment is needed to determine the special needs of the child (Banks *et al.,* 2012). In India, the NIOS, CBSE, CISCE and the state boards of education have accommodations for children at the secondary and senior-secondary levels, based on a formal diagnosis by authorized organizations. For example, children with a formal diagnosis of ASD can avail of an adult prompter for the examinations; children with dysgraphia can avail the service of a scribe in the NIOS board. Lebeer *et al.,* (2010, p.380) have suggested a framework for describing SEN that moves away from a medical label like ASD or ADHD (Appendix-10).

They suggest a classification of SEN based on curriculum adaptations, individualized curriculum, assistive technology, personal and therapeutic assistance. The model they suggest combines individual disabilities and the provision that the school system needs to make to provide learning support for the child. I opine that a diagnosis of SEN is necessary from the point of the impact that the SEN has on the child's academic and socio-emotional needs in the school. An understanding of SEN is important to teachers in designing a classroom, setting expectations, framing work and in assessment. As mentioned in the previous section, the individual and the system together contribute to successful inclusion.

The words inclusion and IE in this study are used interchangeably. IE in this study is in the context of inclusion in education. Though inclusion in its most general sense goes beyond disability and means education for all, this study looks specifically about how such generalized ideas about IE deal with issues in the education of children with disabilities and difficulties. This study also does not cover all categories of SEN, it focuses mainly on LD, SEBD, ADHD, and HFASD (Appendix-9-Related Terms used in SEN). According to Karande *et al*., (2011), almost 5 to 15% of school-going children have SLD. This focus is not surprising as many children categorised as having more complex needs tend to be educated in special schools (Srivastava, 2018).

3.5 Inclusion, inclusive school and SEN in the Indian context and as used in this study

3.5.1 Literature on inclusive education in India

A review of legislation and programs in India in the area of inclusion, details of the education system in India and challenges to inclusion in India has been presented in Chapter 2. This section briefly reports the practice of inclusion in a few other Indian schools, a synopsis of studies on inclusion in India and a few prominent contributors to research from India. Several studies in inclusion in India have reported on legislation, efficacy of programs and assessment of provisions (Singal 2006b and 2019, Aruna *et al.,* 2016, Srivastva *et al.,* 2015, Rose *et al.,* 2021). Some studies have explored the meaning of inclusion and practices in schools (Singal 2006a, Johansson *et al.,* 2021). Studies by researchers such as Das *et al.,* (2013), Bhatnagar and Das (2014), Sharma *et al.,* (2008), Johansson (2014) and Bansal (2016) have explored teachers concerns in implementation of IE and attitudes of teachers. Some have written about the nature of inclusion in rural and urban schools (Johansson, 2014; Rose *et al.,* 2021). There are few studies – Johansson (2014), Jha (2010) and Sawhney, (2015) – that have focused on implementation of IE in schools. Thus, there is a gap in literature in empirical studies in India on implementation of inclusion (Rose *et al.,* 2021; Johansson *et al.,* 2021; Singal 2019).

A synopsis of studies that document the MoI in a few schools in India:

The book From Special to Inclusive Education in India (2010) written by Madan Mohan Jha discusses the MoI followed by three schools in Delhi, the capital of India. These are briefly explained in the table below:

Name of school	Special Education setting – Model of Inclusion
Gyan Vihar School	In a separate location; with special-educators
Plainfield	In the main school but well-defined boundaries; has special-educators
St Cross	Linked to main school with least boundaries as compared to the other two; no special-educators

In Gyan Vihar, special education was a separate unit, outside the main school; in Plainfield it was within the main school with definite boundaries; while at St. Cross it was linked to the main school with less-defined boundaries. Thus, it is evident that inclusion was understood and implemented differently by these three schools – ranging from segregation to pull-out rooms for a few children. All the three schools seem to have a strong sense of welfare and help that was responsible for starting the special education units (Jha, 2010, p.117). In Gyan Vihar, the principal felt that CWSN felt marginalized when they were part of the main school setting; hence segregation in the special centre helped. At Plainfield too, it was felt that integration was better than having children the mainstream-class all the while, mainly because the mainstream-teachers were not trained, and that there was no point in training all teachers. Hence, having them in a separate class with special-educators, and integrating them for part of the day was a better option, was the opinion of that school. While at St. Cross, there was a separate unit, but mainstream-teachers were trained for SpEd too. The divide between the mainstream teachers and SpEd team was quite evident in the first two schools according to Jha (2010).

Another study reports on the practices adopted in two inclusive schools, a government school and a private school in Hyderabad, India (Sawhney, 2015). The management of both the schools described their schools as having children with different abilities and from varied socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, and hence inclusive. The private school was perceived to take children with easy disabilities. The government school had more CWD since they were obliged to admit all who applied. However, it was found that there were no changes made to the infrastructure, curriculum or evaluation system to accommodate the diverse needs in both schools.

3.5.2 Inclusion, SEN and inclusive school in the Indian context

IE and inclusion are terms frequently used in the GOI policy documents as highlighted by Johansson (2014). Johansson (2014) also observes that that most educators talk about inclusion with respect to SEN especially in private schools. SSA (2007, p.1) states that CWSN was one of the most important groups for inclusion, to achieve the goal of education for all. Both IECYD (2005) and IEDSS (2009) have the word IE and disabilities in their titles. However, IE was defined as "an approach that seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion" in IECYD (2005) (Johansson, 2014, p.1224); thus stressing on education for all. While, one of the primary goals of IECYD (2005) was to 'ensure the inclusion of children and youth with disabilities in all general education settings' (IEDSS, 2009, p.2). The IEDSS (2009, p.2) aimed to "enable all students with disabilities to complete eight years of elementary schooling an opportunity to complete four years of secondary schooling in an inclusive and enabling environment". According to the RPWD (2016, p.4) "inclusive education means a system of education wherein students with and without disability learn together and the system of teaching and learning is suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of different types of students with disabilities". Further, the act states that children with a benchmark disability (defined as a person with minimum 40% disability level) have 'the right to free education in a neighbourhood school, or in a special school, of his or her choice'. The various definitions of SEN in GOI policy documents are mentioned is Section 2.2. SSA (2007, p.1) also mentions the various options available for CWSN such as being part of a mainstream school, and that "the dual objective of embracing this model is to bring more CWSN under the umbrella of SSA and to provide to CWSN appropriate need-based skills, be it vocational, functional literacy or simply activities of daily living. Further, an attempt is being made to provide these skills in the most appropriate learning environment." The state government has flexibility in implementation of SSA. Some models used in different states are bridge courses for CWSN, home-based support for children with severe disabilities, parental and community mobilization and special schools. A real-life instance where a government school in a rural area talks about school-based inclusive services and home-based support for children with severe disabilities (Vignette2#1, Section 2.3) exemplifies this point. Thus, words such as children and youth with disabilities, CWSN, general education, inclusive and enabling environment, and adapting teaching are used in the policy documents that convey the emphasis on CWD in inclusion and the need for changes in environment too. Additionally, India follows a multi-option system to inclusion and not necessarily mainstreaming all CWSN.

GOI in its policy documents (SSA, 2007 and 2017) emphasize the identification of CWSN, providing aids and appliances to children in need, teacher training, head-teacher training, resource person training for IE, parental training and community mobilization, removal of architectural barriers and involvement of resource institutes is encouraged. These developments in policy suggest that the GOI is approaching IE from the medical and social model, by emphasizing on aspects such as identification of needs, developing infrastructure and aspects of school system including resource support and training for teachers. However, there are important areas that are not included in the policies such as curricular structure. All boards of education have the same curriculum for all students, CWSN also are expected to fit into the same curricular structure. Provisions such as increased focus on vocational subjects, different methods of assessment have found a notable mention in the recent NEP (2020) which is yet to be implemented. Singal (2019) rightly points out that "efforts continue to be focused on including CWD into a mainstream system, which is itself fraught with systemic problems that remain largely unaddressed". While, there are advantages to the multi-option model of education such as increase in enrolment figures including CWSN (Section 2.2) there have been questions on the quality and effectiveness of these models (Singal, 2019). The constitution of India mandates education as a fundamental right, but the flexibility in placement leads to ambiguity and parents of CWSN having challenges in admission to schools. There is also a lack of research data that investigates the academic and social outcomes of the increased enrolment of CWSN in schools (Singal, 2019; Johansson, 2014). Analyzing the few studies conducted in India, Singal (2019) reports that while teachers accepted the physical presence of CWSN in their classrooms, they felt ill-equipped to teach them; children were observed to be at the fringe of the teaching and learning process. Johansson (2014, p.1231) raises the issue of the 'how of IE' not being addressed. For example, GOI has policies that mention strengthening training for teachers and improving infrastructure, but it does not get into details such as how can training be imparted on the lines of capacity building of teacher training institutes; or changes in assessment structure that right now focuses mainly on paper-and-pencil methods. The other important point she raises is on the aspect of countries in the South (such as India) following the North (such as the UK and the USA) in the development and implementation of IE. India has a diverse socio-economic background; a range of schools such as rural, semi-urban and urban; government, aided by government and private that in turn has an impact on the infrastructure of the school; and multiple boards of education - in a kaleidoscope like this, the program to include all children in the school system would be vastly different. There are schools (private and aided) that make the choice of admitting CWSN and children from different socio-economic backgrounds; however, there are schools that admit CWSN for various other reasons such as increasing enrolment or being unaware of the SEN at the time of enrolment (Johansson, 2014).

The GOI documents often refer to CWSN, examples of these are given in Section 2.2. The term is not defined and seems to be regarded as synonymous with CWD (Johansson, 2014, p.1233). English is an official language in India, and hence adopting international terminology has been easy (Singal, 2019). The assessment reports issued by organizations recommended by boards of examination, mention the disability with reference to the international standards such as ICD or DSM. The word SEN and CWSN appears in government documentation in connection with IE, especially since India became a signatory to the Salamanca Statement (Singal, 2019). Singal (2019) based on a detailed analysis of research studies, policy documents analysis and secondary data analysis on issues related to IE at the national and state level over two decades reveals that the word CWSN was also synonymously used with CWD; as evident in this quote from SSA (2007) in Singal (2019) where CWSN are " … they who have one or more impairments: sensory, such as hearing or visual impairment; orthopedic or intellectual". The RPWD Act (2016, p.3) defines a person with disability (PWD) as "a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others". In 2015, Prime Minister Modi, in a national address said that PWD can be addressed as 'divyangjan' in Hindi meaning (one of the official languages in India) 'person with divine body' (The Hindu-1, 2019). This nomenclature, while trying to use a word with a positive connotation, also glorifies a PWD or a CWSN, by moving away from reality. The United Nations' Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has marked the word 'divyangjan' as controversial and similar to derogatory terminologies such as 'mentally ill' (The Hindu-1, 2019). While celebrating differences is a positive approach, this word also implies that they are endowed with divine powers to fight their challenges (Singal, 2019). Singal (2019) notes that at the ground level too some teachers in north India implied that CWSN have divine powers in them. She argues that, 'the notion of how difference is recognised is a powerful one, as it impacts on how difference is represented'. 'Taare Zameer Par', a commercial box-office movie had a huge impact in getting the masses to understand about 'learning disability' and the idea of inclusion. The central character in the movie was a 10-year boy, with SLD, but gifted in drawing. While the movie was impactful in dismissing many notions such as unsuitability of mainstream school for children who cannot read, it also conveyed that CWSN have a hidden talent. Parents could leave such presentations with the assumption that all CWSN are endowed with a special talent. In the Indian context, the terms - special school, mainstream school and inclusive school – are widely used. It is common to hear a parent or educator say, 'that's an inclusive school' – and quite often what is implied is a mainstream school that is inclusive in its enrolment of children and admits CWD. Johansson (2014, p.1226) states that "'inclusive schools were one type of school that was wider than the mainstream school and could take in a few more types of children. Inclusive schools were the best place to meet the needs of a CWSN facing difficulty in their school".

Summarizing, India follows various models of inclusion such as resource-room, special school and home schooling and not necessarily full inclusion. While there is emphasis in government policies on IE, identification of CWSN, making provisions for CWSN and teacher training; there are challenges in implementation. NEP (2020) addresses many of these challenges including curriculum and teacher training.

3.5.3 Inclusion, SEN and the inclusive school in this study

I opine that the medical model, social model and capabilities approach are not mutually exclusive. If the potential of a child has to be maximized; it is important that the student, school and parents acknowledge the abilities and challenges of the child. Identification of a difficulty that may impede a child from participating either in the class, or outside the class is essential for bringing about a change in the systems and culture of the school. The school must be a place where diversity is welcomed, acknowledged and addressed. Herein lies the importance of extending the scope of school in extending its resources, designing infrastructure, providing dedicated support systems, training teachers, embracing inclusive pedagogy and in providing opportunities for the child to realize his potential. The emphasis is on providing all children including those with SEN, opportunities to learn and participate in all domains (academic and socio-emotional). Hence, if pulling-out a child out for added input on a specific area helps him participate in the classroom sessions better, the disadvantage of not being in the classroom during the pull-out session is to be accepted. The child who is pulled-out may feel a sense of being included in the pull-out room in the areas where he has challenges. In other words, inclusion is more a continuum, and not absolute. If placement takes precedence over learning, and the child's specific needs are not addressed, then placement will be a step towards physical inclusion; and the other aspects such as learning and social inclusion may not be addressed. Sebba and Ainscow (1996) succinctly state that, 'there is no such thing as an inclusive school, there is a process of inclusion that has no limits'. This directly points to the fact that every school could strive to become more inclusive than what they presently are. It is also evident that inclusion is based on many themes including valuing all learners, scholastic or educational achievement, attending to diversity, school reorganization, participation, sense of belonging and exclusion. As almost all researchers concur it is difficult to base inclusion on one theme or have a binding and conclusive definition (as illustrated in Table 3.1). Norwich (2014) says that there is ambiguity in the themes that define inclusion and that it is better to talk about various inclusions rather than inclusion. Norwich's arguments have particular resonance when considering the great disparity that exists between the more economically advantages countries associated with the west and those whose economic development has been less rapid. Accordingly, inclusion in this study refers to academic and social inclusion of which achievement, participation, social inclusion and exclusion are important parameters.

3.5.4 SEN and CWSN, mainstream and the inclusive school in this study

A CWSN – is one who has a difficulty which calls for special education provision to be made for him or her. In the scope of this study, the difficulty could be due to several factors including: a) difficulty due the child being on one of the following impairment spectrums like SLD, ADHD, ASD, slow learners b) difficulty due to children coming from the weaker or disadvantaged sections as described in previous section c) difficulty due to SEBD d) any difficulty that may manifest as a difficulty in learning. This diagnosis may not always be a formal clinical one. Many a time the difficulties and the need for special education maybe reported by the parents or teachers.

Mainstream school: Most schools in India follow a curriculum set at the national level or state level. Some schools give a choice of national or state curriculum. These curricula culminate in secondary education unto Grade X, the minimum age for which is 14 years.

Inclusive school - I summarize that an inclusive school would have an inclusive school culture that is welcoming of all students. The school believes in having a climate that fosters a sense of belonging in all children. Achievement and participation of all children would be one of the main points of consideration. Such schools also invest in leadership at all levels; and work on collaboration between various stakeholders and shared responsibility. The school addresses areas and steps in the schooling system like curriculum, instruction and evaluation; teaching methods and strategies; infrastructure and other teaching material. The school's focus on professional development is ongoing and continuous; to include teachers in service and teachers who are new to the school. These features together constitute what may be known as an 'inclusive approach'.

3.6 Chapter summary

Inclusion is defined as a place and as a process; scope includes CWSN to all marginalized groups to education for all. Inclusion could mean to say whole school improvement to a person-centred approach. Inclusion happens at different levels, in different arenas and to different degrees. The medical model of disability primarily focuses on identification of the SEN within the individual and working with the person; while the social model lays more importance to the environment around the CWSN. The capabilities approach recognizes both the individual and the environment in improving the capabilities of the CWSN. Some important characteristics of an inclusive school include value and focus on all children; teacher training, attitude and resources; collaborative team and shared responsibility; and leadership. There is a gap in literature from India in the area of empirical research and practical implementation of inclusion. The few existing Indian studies in the area of inclusion suggest that the MoI followed is different from school to school, lack of teacher training and a mixed response to attitudes of teachers. Inclusion in this study includes academic and social inclusion. CWSN is a child who has a difficulty that may need an additional provision.

Chapter 4 – Thematic Framework for Inclusive Practice in India

The process of searching for themes is a central part of qualitative analysis and helps in the transformation of raw data into a thematic structure. This process helps in reorganising data into a structure of themes that lead to findings (Bostrom, 2019). This chapter discusses 1) the process of choosing the three main studies or papers that were used for arriving at the thematic framework for this study based on experiential, contextual and cultural considerations and review of literature, and 2) some indicative literature on themes for the study.

4.1 Context

I examined a number of existing theories that would help me arrive at a thematic framework for this study. It was important that I investigate and explore a variety of areas including student diversity and composition, approaches to teaching and learning, assessment policy, curriculum framework, provisions for inclusion, people involved in decision-making and challenges faced by the school to meet the research objectives of the study. A review of literature reveals that publications from organizations such as UNESCO and UNICEF; studies from authors including Ainscow and César (2006); Görannson and Nilholm (2014); Qvortrup and Qvortrup, 2017; Loreman (2014); Norwich (2002 and 2014) and Booth and Ainscow (2002) discuss various aspects of inclusion such as conceptualizations and definition of IE, institutional self-review in inclusion and criteria to gauge the efficacy of IE in their system. Most of these studies have evolved and been implemented in the Western context. There are several differences between the Western and the Indian context including legislation, demographic, cultural and socio-economic considerations. There are also differences in the training needs and availability of trainers, participation of stakeholders and important allied professionals such as psychologists and psychiatrists, therapists and counsellors. Loreman (2014) notes that given the importance of context in IE one tool is not adequate to meet the needs of all schools and school systems. A review of Indian studies in the area of inclusion reveals that there are few studies that discuss the MoI (see Section 3.5.1), and discussions on thematic framework for inclusive practice were not found in these studies.

The research reported in this thesis was a case study that aimed to describe the meaning of inclusion by the school, provisions made and leadership positions in the school. Hence there was a need to have a working description of inclusion and SEN, and indicators to be able to measure inclusion. This would help in understanding of ‘what is/are inclusion, provisions and leadership roles’, and to propose towards preparing the school to ‘what may be inclusion, provisions and leadership roles’. While the context is different between countries across the world, at the micro level, parameters such as provisions in the school, attitude and training of teachers, curriculum and teaching strategies and leadership approaches affect and influence the culture in the school. These are recurring themes in most studies on IE (Forlin and Loreman, 2014; Loreman, 2014). These are parameters that render themselves to being considered in contexts that are global. There was much deliberation on my part as a researcher that this study should not fall into the category of fitting an Indian context into a western context, and contextual similarities and differences have been consciously addressed.

4.2 The three main studies for developing the themes

The three main studies used to arrive at the themes for this study were:

- Index for Inclusion (referred to as the Index henceforth) developed by Booth and Ainscow (2002),
- Loreman’s (2014) ‘inputs–processes–outcomes’ model, and
- the UNESCO (2017) publication ‘A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education’.

The Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) is premised on explicitly articulated principles of inclusion, takes into account experience of all members and aspects of a school and is a rich resource that provides comprehensive parameters for evaluation. Loreman’s (2014) model enabled the conceptualization of inclusion from different perspectives such as provisions, identification and assessment, and in terms of outcomes including academic and socio-emotional. The UNESCO (2017) publication considers the understanding of inclusion from a global perspective and reinforces that while cultural and contextual differences exist between countries, there are common guidelines to the process of inclusion.

4.2.1 Index for Inclusion

Instruments such as the Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002), Inclusion Quality Mark, (Coles and Hancock, 2002) developed in England and Inclusive Education Framework (National Council for Special Education, 2011) in Ireland aid schools in the process of self-review and aim to assist progress towards more effective inclusive practices. The Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) has been translated into many languages, while its cultural validity remains unaddressed (Forlin and Loreman, 2014, p.41). It explores inclusion and exclusion along three interconnected dimensions of school improvement: creating inclusive cultures, producing inclusive policies and evolving inclusive practices; which renders it the flexibility to be used at different stages of the inclusion process. The Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) uses the theme 'creating inclusive cultures' as a base on which practices and policies of schools are developed. The authors say that "at times, too little attention has been given to the potential for school cultures to support or undermine developments in teaching and learning" (p.8). A school culture that permeates all levels of the process from the classroom to school, from support staff to the principal helps in including children. For example, when a young child who needs motivation from the teacher to talk and interact with others is being intentionally sent on an errand to the coordinator's office. On the way, if the support staff who meet him encourage him instead of reprimanding him for being out of class; and if the coordinator too knowing the motive coaxes the child to run his errand successfully, instead of hurriedly enquiring – these indicate a strong and collaborative school culture. Therefore, culture is an important theme in this study. The Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) is based on the social model of disability, and hence focus is on the systems and processes of the school. However, in my opinion a diagnosis of the difficulty is also important to realize its impact on socio-emotional and academic development of the child, and for planning in the classroom for the teacher. The authors of the Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) acknowledge this and state the language of SEN influences practices and is often needed to write an IEP and secure resources for the child. The Index also emphasizes participation and exclusion as one of the key parameters of inclusion, concepts that I am in alignment with as a researcher. In the Index, SEN is conceptualized as 'barriers to learning and participation', to deflect attention from labelling a child and to draw direct attention to interrogate what needs to be done to improve the education of any child. Though I am in agreement with the concept of reducing barriers to learning and participation, I do think identifying the nature of the difficulty with the objective of drawing an educational plan for the child is necessary. For example, challenges faced by children such as issues with vision, hearing, sensory inputs in the classroom need to be known in order to decide the seating arrangement or alter the seating arrangements to enable all children to participate; on the sports field the limitation caused due to motor skills such as the distance a child can run, or throw a ball need to be known to plan the games sessions. The Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002, p.5) also makes some practical and realistic acknowledgments such as language of SEN being a barrier; however, it is present in schools and policies, and shifting to a different terminology may create complexity; hence moving from existing language would take time. The Index being a self-review document, could not be used directly in this study, because I was an outsider in MPES. However, its focus on a broad range of issues such as fostering positive attitudes and socio-emotional factors of learning such as participation, besides academic achievement and approach to disability were useful in developing themes for the study.

4.2.2 Loreman's input-processes-output model

Loreman (2014) takes a different view of assessing inclusion and proposes a set of outcomes at each stage of the inclusion process. The 'inputs–processes–outcomes' model proposed by Loreman (2014), was based on a set of 51 papers that were chosen from an initial systematic review selection of 281 research peer-reviewed papers and all dated post-2001. This paper was updated in the same year to include 87 more documents out of which 28 were retained following criteria-based assessment, along with papers from developing countries which were not part of the earlier review. Loreman proposes outcomes – as desirable end-states, to measure inclusion. Outcomes are measured in 3 stages – inputs, processes and outputs; which span various levels of the school system including government, school, classroom, teacher and students. In the initial stages of the research process one of the objectives was to look at parameters that would help in evaluating provisions made by schools to enable the process of inclusion. Based on my professional experience, discussions with peer-educators, awareness of the Indian education system and exploratory reading of literature the following emerged as parameters that could be examined:

a) some teachers were committed to inclusion and despite lack of training adopted inclusive approaches,

b) coordinators in some schools had a strong will to address diverse learners, but inadequate training and attitude of teachers was a challenge; an added challenge was having to convince the management,

c) some teachers used strategies that were inclusive in nature, but were not documented, leading to a lack of collaboration amongst them,

d) some coordinators mentioned that they wished they had more knowledge on differential assessments, especially for primary and middle-school,

e) teachers expressed concern on academic achievement and socio-emotional development of all children if they were to become inclusive of all children, which reflected in questions on the lines of 'if I have 'slow children' in my class, the smart children may get bored' and 'I have this hyperactive child in my class, but I don't see him participating',

f) a difficulty in identifying CWSN,

g) lack of training for teachers and demands on their time in adapting and making the curriculum accessible to all, and

h) importance of leaders at all levels who show a strong commitment to inclusion.

A detailed reading of Loreman's model led me to the deduce that parameters such as the ones mentioned above exist in all countries, and that some of these themes would be relevant in this study. These themes were conceptualised keeping in mind the aims of the study, while Loreman's model organizes themes along input-processes-outputs. The themes proposed by Loreman (2014) were useful in validating my initial conceptualization of parameters for formation of potential themes for the study such as policy, staff professional development and teacher education, leadership, curriculum, culture, school practices, classroom practices, collaboration and shared responsibility, participation and student achievement. The outcomes-based approach was found to be useful in identifying areas of strength and improvement in the processes and polices of the school, that helped in formulating areas of improvement for MPES. The model proposed by Loreman (2014, p.465) addresses this issue and suggests that it maybe "helpful in identifying which areas of the system specifically might be contributing to or detracting from the ultimate goal of achieving inclusive schooling".

4.2.3 UNESCO's A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education

The UNESCO (2017) publication 'A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education' draws on international research and on what are perceived to be best practices related to equity and inclusion in education systems. Since UNESCO is a global organization, this guide has inputs from different countries and not only the USA, UK and the Scandinavian countries. The examples quoted in this guide include those from Africa, Bangladesh, Cambodia and Denmark, which is an indication that the document aims at reaching out to countries at various levels of socio-economic development and covers a larger cultural diversity. The guide was developed "with the advice and support of a group of international experts, including policy-makers, practitioners, researchers, teacher educators, curriculum developers and representatives of various international agencies" (p.10). As a result of which it can be used by schools and teachers besides the government and policy-makers. This guide has many examples from what has been implemented in different countries across the world. According to Hameed and Manzoor (2019), UNESCO has emerged as a premier change agent for negotiating with governments and initiating a simultaneous change in the policy.

The UNESCO (2017) guide advocates inclusion and equity as a process and projects four dimensions which are: Concepts, Policy Statements, Structures and Systems, and Practices and thus covers the different organizational levels. The Concepts dimension emphasises on developing a curriculum that will include all learners; and affirms that presence, participation and achievement of learners are among the most important factors for success. The Policy dimension states that leaders at all levels have an important role in promoting inclusion, and stresses on the important role of leaders at all levels in nurturing a conducive environment to challenge non-inclusive educational practices and to be able to establish conditions to implement inclusive practices. The third dimension Structures and Systems and the fourth dimension Practices, list areas that are directly connected to school systems such as high-quality support for learners, distribution of resources, role of special education and initial training and continuing professional development for teachers, curriculum aspects and leadership practices. These helped in formulating themes such as Participation and Achievement, School and Classroom Practices, Leadership and Collaboration and Shared responsibility. The UNESCO (2017) guide being a global document, strengthens my belief that in any study of inclusion there are commonalities in themes that need to be evaluated keeping in mind the difference in cultures and contexts; countries and its people.

4.3 Thematic framework

The three aforementioned documents were instrumental in helping me develop an understanding of inclusion and SEN, guidelines for assessing the inclusive practices of the school, and how principles might be applied in inclusive schoolrooms. Inclusion could be considered as a western context, and may be imposed on developing countries; however, the values on inclusion can be applicable in countries across the world (Forlin and Loreman, 2014, p.196). If these principles were applied without consideration to the context of the country, it would be a futile attempt to define, evaluate and suggest areas for improvement. For example, the education policy in India does not prescribe a MoI that needs to be followed by schools. Being aware of it helped me in exploring how schools implement inclusion. Another example is the large class sizes and lack of resources in India. My experience and literature (Das *et al*., 2013; Bansal, 2016; Singal, 2019) suggest that most teachers are not trained in inclusive classroom approaches, and that there is a difference in the training levels of both in-service and pre-service teachers. Hence, I had to be mindful of this when teachers described aspects such as inclusion and SEN, school practices and curriculum. Following an established self-evaluation document like the Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002), or the Loreman's model (2014) runs the risk of getting formulaic, I had to be mindful of the fact that these documents were being used to form themes and a framework for evaluating my research, and were not intended to be used directly.

Table 4.1 lists parameters that are relevant to each question in my view, and the themes arrived in conjunction with the aforementioned three studies. These studies were critical in collapsing the various ideas that emerged as themes under research questions. As data collection progressed and initial analysis of findings started, these were further refined, as explained in chapter 5 on methodology.

Research question 1: How is MPES describing inclusion and SEN?	**Themes arrived at based on review of literature**
Parameters that were considered to understand RQ1	Description of SEN Model of Inclusion Participation, achievement and social inclusion and exclusion School and classroom practices Processes Teacher training Teacher attitude School culture Collaboration and shared responsibility Leadership – aspects and types Disability v/s Difference Policy
Awareness and description of inclusion and SEN by different stakeholders in the system Views on parameters associated with inclusion like participation and exclusion, achievement and social inclusion	
Research question 2: What are the provisions made by MPES to include children with SEN?	
Parameters that were considered to understand RQ2	
Curriculum, teaching and learning strategies used in the school Accommodations and differentiation Details on evaluation strategies At the classroom level - strategies, management and placement Provisions made in resource-room and remedial sessions Opportunities for social inclusion Process of identification and assessment of SEN Teacher training Collaboration and shared responsibility Policy	
Research question 3: Who are the influential individuals in decision making and practice in developing IE in this school?	
Parameters that were considered to understand RQ3	
Explore leadership roles in the school at different levels Their role in decision-making across areas spanning from admission to evaluation	

Table 4.1: Initial thematic framework - parameters and initial themes arrived for the research aims and questions

4.3.1. Indicators of inclusion - participation, achievement and social inclusion

Participation, achievement and social inclusion are important indicators of inclusion.

Participation: To participate – to be involved in the academic and social activities of the school – is of immense importance in education. It is important that CWSN are provided the opportunities to be involved in social and academic activities that the other non-disabled students have (Loreman, 2014). Participation and exclusion are mutually exclusive and are not constants; increased participation leads to decreased exclusion and vice versa, as is illustrated in the following examples.

Child 1: has severe difficulties in the area of spelling and writing, is good at basketball. On the basketball court, he is an important member of the team, and is the first to be chosen to be part of any game.

Child 2: is in 6th grade has a learning difficulty in reading. He has good fine motor skills and is part of a team making an origami project. He cannot be an actively participating member of the team, if the instructions are not read out to him.

An analysis of these situations reveals that Child 1 experiences high levels of inclusion in the sports field, and does not feel excluded. He is not able to contribute to the same extent in the classroom, thus bringing down his level of inclusion in the classroom and feels left out quite often. In the case of Child 2, acceptance plays an important role – acceptance of the CWSN of his need and acceptance of the CWSN and his needs by the other team members. Thus, participation as a parameter is intertwined with access, collaboration, mutual recognition and acceptance (Black-Hawkins, 2010).

Achievement: IE emphasizes achievement of all students – with and without SEN. Loreman (2014, p.470) says "one of the primary outcomes of any education system, inclusive or not, is that all students learn and can demonstrate their achievement". IE ideally strives for achievement of all learners, in all domains, and advocates using differential teaching methods. This means that while assessing academic achievement is of paramount importance; assessing progress in extra-curricular activities, behavior in the classroom, social situations and playground is equally important. According to Black-Hawkins (2010, p.22), achievement is usually seen in terms of raising academic standards as measured by national tests and examinations, rather than more broadly so as to encompass social, emotional, creative, and physical achievements as well. The achievements of Child 1 on the sports field and of Child 2 with respect to his motor skill ability need to be given as much importance as academic achievement. For example, Child 3, a CWSN in 2nd grade who at the beginning of the academic year could not complete tasks set out for him in the classroom in the time allotted by the teacher is able to sit and complete the tasks in the timeframe set by his teacher towards the end of the second term – this is progress too, that needs to be accounted for in achievement. Therefore, achievement is best measured in all domains - academic, socio-emotional and behavioural. Black-Hawkins (2010, p.27) argues that “inclusion without achievement is of limited value, and likewise there can be little worthwhile achievement without inclusion”.

Social inclusion: According to Fore III *et al.*, (2008) an important issue when it comes to inclusion of CWSN in mainstream classrooms is its effect on student’s learning and social relations with classmates. To be socially included is to be able to socially participate and be accepted in the systems of the school and wider community. Participation is closely linked with social inclusion. Aspects such as CWSN being part of discussions when their peers plan for a social event, being invited to birthday parties, and the importance given to CWSN when they voice their opinions and views, help increase children’s sense of belonging. Leeuw *et al.*, (2017) says that social participation of which acceptance is a main aspect is important for social inclusion. They state that social inclusion implies that students need to be socially accepted and participating actively in the school, and that they should be seen as valued members of the school community. They also categorically say that social inclusion leads to a better sense of belonging and academic performance. A child who feels a part of the social fabric of the class experiences higher self-esteem and higher levels of confidence. This leads to an increase in positive behavior such as motivation and interest to learn, paying attention in class; which leads to better academic performance.

4.3.2 Model of Inclusion

Italy is one of the countries, where schools follow a full inclusion model (Nepi *et al.*, 2013). In an empirical study conducted in Italian primary schools, it was found that CWSN struggle to gain acceptance and feel distant from their friends; and that full inclusion of CWSN was not sufficient to increase CWSN’s social abilities. While, in a study conducted in UK, Farrell *et al.*, (2007) report that no systematic relationship was found between inclusion and achievement, and inclusive schools need not be worried about academic achievement and effect on social-emotional outcomes in CWSN. In this context, Hornby (2015, p.20) argues that “the right to an appropriate education which meets children’s specific needs is more important than the right to be educated alongside their mainstream peers”, and that may not happen in the mainstream classroom. Depending on the complexity of their needs, some children may need to be supported outside the classroom. According to Loreman (2014, p.469) support to individuals in order to address their individual needs and strengths is an important feature of an effective inclusive education system. Hornby (2015) suggests a continuum of placement options including mainstream class with differentiation of work, specialist teacher, some time spent in resource-room; special class in a mainstream school and special school attached to mainstream school. Lemons *et al*., (2018) study on existing delivery models in the USA reveals that the number of schools providing Multi-Tiered systems of support (MTSS) are increasing. The tiers are mainstream classroom (Tier 1), supplemental general education intervention (Tier 2 and 3) and special education resource-rooms (separated from the tiers). The intent of resource-rooms is to “provide a setting where teachers could work with students either in small groups or individually, and thus provide them with an intensive, individualized program of study” (Lemons, 2018, p.13). An inclusive classroom need not necessarily rule out the possibility of children being pulled-out for remedial support. Focused one-on-one or group intervention at the child’s functioning level is needed for some children to feel part of the classroom. For example, Child 2 (Section 4.3.1) may benefit from a one-on-one session in reading skills, which may in turn help him cope with his classroom better. Similarly, Child 3 (Section 4.3.1) may benefit when teachers in the pull-out rooms specifically work with him on attention building activities.

4.3.3 School and classroom practices

Successful implementation of the policies of the school and the curriculum that is designed with inclusion in mind depends on school and classroom practices. Loreman (2014, p.468) says ‘school practices impact the quantity and quality of inclusion’ and that ‘school inclusion is realized mainly at the classroom level’. Srivastava et al., (2015) assert that while developments at policy level are important, IE ultimately is about changing education in the school and classroom. This resonates with Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017) dimensions of inclusion (Section 3.1), that inclusion happens at various levels, places and degrees in a school. In a class where diversity is definitely present, there is variance in several parameters including readiness levels, interest and motivation levels, abilities, strengths and needs. While the curriculum prescribes content, makes provision for adapted content and differentiated processes and assessment procedures; it is in the classroom that teachers implement these. “Differentiated Instruction (DI), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and if required a focus on key areas for individuals within the context of a lesson” are instructional classroom practices for inclusive classrooms says Loreman (2014, p.468). In other words, to ensure that a well-planned curriculum reaches out to all learners, teachers need to effectively adopt inclusive practices such as DI and UDL.

4.3.3.1 Curriculum

According to the UNESCO (2004, p.12) publication,

> *Curriculum comprises what is learned and what is taught (context); how it is delivered (teaching-learning methods); how it is assessed (exams, for example); and the resources used (e.g., books used to deliver and support teaching and learning).*

and the UNESCO (2017, p.18) guide states that “an inclusive curriculum allows students to work at their own pace, and in their own way, within a common framework of objectives”. Avissar (2012, p.36), who conducted her research in Israel, describes curriculum along similar lines and states that ‘inclusion does have some major implications for the curriculum itself’. Besides prescribing the content on what needs to be taught, the curriculum also lays down a framework and guidelines for methodology of teaching, the flow or sequence of teaching, different ways of assessing what has been learnt or acquired by the children and resources used in the process. In this study too curriculum refers to the syllabus or the content prescribed at different grade levels, and the teaching, learning and evaluation process and strategies to be followed. According to Srivastava (2018) curriculum and instructional adaptations in the classroom are very important in the practice of inclusion.

4.3.3.2 Instructional practices

Differentiated Instruction (DI) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) are two inclusive pedagogical models that are commonly used in inclusive approaches. Griful-Freixenet *et al.*, (2020, p.19) who undertook a systematic literature review to analyze the interrelationship between these state that “UDL and DI are possibly referring to the same content and concepts, merely using different terminology, with perhaps only slightly different emphases”. Though a detailed discussion of these may not be possible in the scope of this study, it is important to understand these models and their applications in order to support reflection on instruction, resources and practice.

Differentiated instruction (DI): DI is based on the belief that variability exists in any group of students and instruction needs to be adjusted accordingly (Griful-Freixenet *et al*., 2020). DI can happen at different stages which are: content - the ‘what’ of the instruction, process - the ‘how’ of the instruction and outcome - the ‘evidence’ of the instruction (Taylor, 2015). Other important principles considered are on-going assessments and flexible grouping strategies, and that students have differences in readiness, interest and learning needs (Griful-Freixenet *et al*., 2020). DI thus involves finding multiple and flexible ways to structure lessons and adjust teaching and learning to meet ability levels of students. It also involves giving opportunities to all students to achieve their maximum growth (Wan, 2016).

Universal Design for Learning (UDL): UDL is an approach that focuses on making learning possible to all learners. By design behavioral and academic goals are built-in in the concept of UDL which makes it conducive to be used in inclusive classrooms (Johnson-Harris and Mundschenk, 2014). Academic learning and socio-emotional and behavioural learning go hand in hand, and influence one another reciprocally. Johnson-Harris and Mundschenk (2014) emphasize that behavior problems impact learning, and learning problems trigger behavior problems. They also add that behaviour management can lead to increased academic achievement. UDL focuses on designing lessons for all learners from the start instead of modifying lessons (Johnson-Harris and Mundschenk, 2014). The focus is on designing accessible curricula and learning environment, and reducing barriers to learning rather than on any particular student (Griful-Freixenet *et al*., 2020). UDL is based on three main principles: multiple means of representation - present information and content in different ways; multiple means of action and expression - differentiate the ways that students express what they know; and multiple means of engagement - stimulate interest in and motivation for learning (Griful-Freixenet *et al*., 2020).

A few concepts from UDL and DI were found to be relevant to the scope of this study. Three instructional changes in DI that are particularly useful (Bondie, 2019):

1. Adjust common instruction: For example, when the class is working on a hands-on activity writing the materials needed on the board as well as saying it aloud.
2. Use specific resources: Having a set of flash cards and giving it to some children for different purposes such as a spelling-help for some, and for children who finish tasks fast it could be an extended activity written on the flashcard.
3. Individualize practice: worksheets of varying difficulty levels.

Instructional barriers is an important concept in UDL. In UDL, teachers who plan proactively consider instructional barriers and incorporate strategies for the same in the lesson-plan (Meier and Rossi, 2020). As children progress through learning, they may face barriers in acquiring skills, curricular content or at an individual level. For example, when children are introduced to measurement – some children may face difficulty in handling the scale, reading the scale or understanding the concept of starting from zero as reference. These difficulties, especially the skill and curricular barriers may be faced by both CW&WOSN. Keeping these in mind while planning for the lesson would ensure that all children have a fair chance at learning.

4.3.4 Collaboration and shared responsibility

Designing an inclusive curriculum and implementing it in order to reach out to all learners involves several people in the organization including class-teachers, subject-teachers, counsellors, special-educators, therapists, coordinators and parents. Collaboration and sharing of responsibility between these people are important parameters of an inclusive school. 'Forming partnerships among key stakeholders who can support and own the process of change is essential' according to the UNESCO guide (2017, p.28). Sharma and Jacobs (2016) state that teachers who are willing to collaborate and consult with their colleagues are more likely to feel positive about inclusion, and that 'collaboration is a critical factor in promoting inclusion'. For example, Child 1 (Section 4.3.1) may need to be talked to, to help him understand his strengths and needs. If the mainstream-teacher is not able to do this due to various constraints including time and training, there has to be a clear provision to reach out to the counsellor. The counsellor needs to be in regular touch with the class-teachers and coordinators to make sure the socio-emotional needs of children are met. Similarly, special-educators will have to collaborate with mainstream-teachers for transference of strategies taught for attention-building to Child 3 (Section 4.3.1) in the resource-room. These efforts also need to be viewed as one where the SpEd team and mainstream-teachers work together and share responsibilities. Providing opportunities – both formal and informal – for sharing amongst the stakeholders helps in facilitating inclusive practices. Meetings amongst teachers of different sections of the school (such as primary, middle and high); focused meetings between the different stakeholders including therapist and parents for some children; and between teachers, coordinators and the principal promote sharing of ideas, opinions and beliefs and helps in ensuring that all people concerned share a common set of assumptions and beliefs. McLeskey and Waldron (2015) found that principals of effective, inclusive schools built trusting relationships with their teachers by engaging them in decision-making and all aspects of school change.

4.3.5 Teacher training and attitude

Teachers have a prominent role in implementing inclusion; much rests on their attitude, training and professional development. In their paper on pre-service educators Sharma *et al*., (2008) highlight and I opine that all teachers – those who are entering the field of education (pre-service) and those who are teachers already (in-service) – need to feel comfortable having CWSN in their classroom; and training programs must address their concerns on inclusion, besides discussing inclusive approaches and pedagogies. Forlin and Chambers (2011) state that IE depends largely on how well-prepared regular school educators are, in terms of their beliefs and skills, to teach students with disabilities. Srivastava *et al*., (2017) summarize based on several research papers including Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden (2002); Bishop and Boag (2006) and Rix *et al*., (2009) that the three factors important for teachers when responding to a diverse student population were:

(1) their attitude: research indicates that there is a positive relationship between supportive attitudes of teachers and enhanced performance of CWD in inclusive classrooms

(2) knowledge about disability types: helps in understanding their learning needs

(3) knowledge about teaching methods: will help in planning for the diversity in class.

Srivastava *et al*., (2017) conducted a study on teachers' preparedness for inclusion in India. This was done with 89 primary-school teachers on their attitudes towards IE, their knowledge about disabilities and knowledge about teaching methods in India. The study focused mainly on four areas of SEN – ADHD, ID, dyslexia and ASD. They report the inadequacy of teacher training programs in terms of attitudes, knowledge of disabilities and teaching methods in India. Some other main findings from this study were: teachers hold neutral attitudes towards IE, their knowledge about disabilities was low, but knowledge about inclusive teaching methods was acceptable. Sharma and Jacobs (2016) state that one area that India continues to lag behind in IE is teacher training. While a B.Ed., is the minimum qualification for a teacher, this has only one unit on special education / disability studies, which is not always mandatory. Anecdotal evidence and Sharma and Jacobs (2016) suggest that there is not much emphasis on inclusive pedagogy and approaches either.

4.3.6 Culture

In the Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) say that creating inclusive cultures is at the heart of school improvement. They say that 'it is through inclusive cultures, that changes in inclusive policies and practices can be sustained'. Inclusive culture is about creating a 'secure, collaborating, accepting and stimulating community' (p.8). An inclusive culture has a set of principles and values that guides policies and practices and renders development a continuous process. Paliokosta and Blandford, (2010, p.181) state that "the term culture provides a more accurate and intuitively appealing way to . . . understand . . . school's own unwritten rules, norms and expectations", and that "schools are organisations that have some sets of shared beliefs that dignify particular practices and behavior". The climate in the school should convey the philosophy of an inclusive one which is of embracing differences, being open to new ideas, of not looking at provisions for CWSN as exclusively for them, but as a move towards inclusive practices that will benefit all children. The climate should convey that all learners are valued and respected (Loreman, 2014). Attitudes of teachers and management contribute in creating an encouraging and motivating climate. When a teacher is convinced about inclusive practices, she approaches the classroom with a belief that she is reaching out to all learners and not only CWSN. This brings about a positive attitude in interacting with the children. On the other hand, a reluctant teacher, who is not convinced about inclusion, may approach the class with a notion of – I have a group of children for whom I need to carve out time from my already packed schedule; or when I teach CWSN, the others in the class are being ignored. This affects the climate of the class and school adversely. 'Teachers' beliefs on inclusive education govern their classroom practices' says Loreman (2014).

According to the UNESCO guide (2017) teacher attitudes can facilitate or inhibit inclusive practices within education systems. In a similar way if management of the school looks at achievement in a holistic way, instead of basing it only on marks and grades, teachers feel empowered to try inclusive practices. Loreman (2014) succinctly says attitudes and beliefs of members of school community play a significant role in producing an inclusive climate.

4.3.7 Leadership

Effective leadership at multiple levels is essential for an inclusive school (Loreman, 2014). The UNESCO guide (2017) emphatically states that leaders at all levels should be able to problem-solve their situations, identify barriers and facilitators and provide effective strategies and inclusive practices. Miskolci *et al*., (2016) state that several authors insist that school leadership extends beyond the role of principal. For example, one of the primary concerns of the teacher is how to ensure that she addresses the diverse needs of all learners in her class. The coordinator may be concerned on how to convince the principal that they need to have different achievement criteria in order to address the diversity of learners. While a primary concern of the principal may be to convince the management to invest in more infrastructure and resources to be able to address the diverse needs of all learners in the school. Each of these educators have to take a decision keeping in mind the core values of the school.

Oskarsdottir *et al*., (2020) report on Supporting Inclusive School Leadership (SISL), a cross-national project that considers how best to ensure that school leaders meet the needs of all learners in their school communities; and discuss objectives and types of leadership – aspects that are relevant to this section. The SISL project examines current theories of school leadership together with the core functions of school leaders in participating countries in order to develop a model specifically focused on inclusive school leadership. One of the definitions of leadership is '…..as a process of providing direction and applying influence' Oskarsdottir *et al*., (2020, p.523). SISL identified three main organizational functions for effective operation of inclusive schools:

- Setting direction: involves building a common philosophy of inclusion, its definition and a commitment towards all its students; and defining standards for implementation for policy and practice.

- Human development: one of the primary roles is to recognize talents of teachers, provide professional development and facilitate collaboration among the teacher community.
- Organizational development: address curriculum, assessment, pedagogy, school organization and developing partnerships with parents and community.

The SISL project identifies three types of leadership – transformational, distributed and instructional. Transformational leadership is 'associated with inspiring others, building a shared vision, providing support and developing a collaborative culture' (Yu *et al*., 2002 in Oskarsdottir *et al*., 2020). This primarily connects with the functions of setting directions and organizational development. Distributed leadership shares responsibility across leadership teams in the organization, and focuses on the core function of human development. It recognizes the collective ability and talent within the school and connects people in a meaningful and productive way. While distributed leadership may be based on inclusive values from the teachers' point of view, it may lead to non-inclusive goals with students. Recognizing this as a possible drawback of distributed leadership, Miskolci *et al*., (2016) argue that principals should be 'autocratic' when introducing core values and beliefs central to IE. Instructional leadership is associated with 'setting and communicating clear instructional goals and expectations' and 'promoting and participating in teacher learning and development' (Brown and Chai, 2012 in Oskarsdottir *et al*., 2020). It is primarily connected with human and organizational development.

4.4 Chapter summary

The Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) which is a practical self-review document that focuses on school improvement towards removing barriers and participation to inclusion, Loreman's (2014) 'input-processes-outputs-model' that evaluates outcomes in these three stages across different levels in the school, and the UNESCO (2017) publication 'A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education' that draws on international research with inputs from several stakeholders and experts ranging from policy-makers to teachers helped in arriving at a thematic framework for the study. The initial themes derived from these were refined and merged into fewer themes which were: Description of SEN, Model of Inclusion, Indicators of inclusion (Participation, Achievement and Social inclusion), School and Classroom Practices, Processes, Teacher Training, Teacher Attitude, School Culture, Collaboration and Shared Responsibility and Leadership – aspects and types. Cultural and contextual considerations were applied in this process. The process of arriving at final themes is explained in the next chapter on methodology.

Chapter 5 Methodology

In this chapter I discuss the design of the study keeping in mind the purpose and thematic framework of the study. Various aspects of design including research design strategy, selection of data collection instruments, sampling methods and ethical considerations are discussed. Details of data analysis such as codes and their application, refining themes from the initial themes derived during literature review, and their connection to research questions are also presented.

5.1 Methodology

This study is predominantly qualitative in nature, and adopts an interpretive approach to the findings from the case study. Interpretative research posits human interpretation as the starting point for developing knowledge about the social world (Prasad, 2005). In interpretive research, concepts as established in research-relevant literature are studied keeping in mind particular contexts (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2011). It helps in making meaning of and in explaining observed phenomena and this interpretation is done by analysing data obtained generally by qualitative methods (Moss, 1996). A limited amount of quantitative data was obtained, but it was too small for statistical analysis to be warranted. These numerical data sets were used to support the qualitative findings, for instance, to indicate the number of participants who had shared an opinion or a strategy. For example, data from 120 questionnaires were used to find out teachers' opinion in placement of CWSN. Robson (2011, p.19) indicates that in a qualitative research study data is presented in a non-numerical form and that contexts and perspectives of people involved are important. In this study too, data from questionnaires of teachers helped in framing the interview questions. Robson (2011) highlights that the design of a qualitative research study is flexible and emerges as it is carried out. Indeed, the initial themes derived from literature review were refined as data emerged. This study involved a small number of people and was conducted in real-time or in other words natural settings, which are features of a qualitative study (Robson, 2011). The structure, systems and processes of schools vary based on factors such as size, context and culture. While generalizability of findings was not a major concern (Robson, 2011); as a researcher I was aware that some structures, systems and processes that have positive outcomes or point to an inclusive pedagogy could be adapted by other schools. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2010) conclude that one of the goals of qualitative research is to obtain insights into particular educational, social, and familial processes and practices that exist within a special location and context. They also indicate that generalization may be made in qualitative research on similarities of contexts and settings. The dynamic and open-ended nature of interpretive research also adds to the flexible design of qualitative research especially in areas such as social and education fields (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2011).

Anecdotal evidence in the early stages of the research study such as interactions with colleagues in the field of mainstream and special education, the presence of an active SpEd team and representation of MPES in seminars on IE suggested that MPES had a commitment to inclusion and highlighted the importance of an investigation. MPES is a large school (with around 6500 children), and initial thoughts around the setting indicated that there would likely be children who have learning needs, even if there was no formal diagnosis.
The emergent research questions in this study were:

1. How is the mainstream school describing inclusion and SEN?
2. What provision is the school making to include children with SEN?
3. Who are the influential individuals in decision-making and practice in developing inclusive education in this school?

While my research questions were defined early in the process, I constantly referred to these throughout the process of reviewing the literature in order to further my own understanding of influences upon the research focus. RQ1 which initially was - how is the mainstream school describing IE – was changed to include SEN. RQ2 which initially was - what provision is the school making to include CWSN in learning – was changed to - provision is the school making to include CWSN. The design of this study was flexible and evolved as it progressed. Robson (2011, p. 132) clarifies that in flexible design ‘it is highly likely that RQs are initially undeveloped and tentative’. The type of RQs also played an important role in choosing a flexible and predominantly qualitative approach (Robson, 2011). ‘How?’, ‘what?’ and ‘why?’ questions indicate an exploratory and descriptive study – which is best achieved by a flexible and qualitative approach (Robson, 2011, p.60 and 80). Bostrom (2019) emphasise the importance of qualitative thinking that involves exploration of data with an open mind; and that research is carried out and affected by a perspective on existing theory. Flexible research design starts with a single idea and some predetermined factors (Robson, 2011, p.132); in this study the central idea was inclusion and SEN; and a study of a school, its structure and processes. Whilst some aspects evolve during data collection (Robson, 2011, p.79); in this study aspects of the research design such as phases of data collection, sampling aspects and refining codes that were initially defined were decided as the study progressed. The thematic framework was developed through literature review, discussion of theory and initial interpretation of data. Since, detailed and intensive data was to be collected about one school, case study method was chosen. Case study has been defined as 'the study of an instance in action' (Adelman *et al*., 1980 in Cohen *et al*., 2017, p.375). As a methodology, case study also uses different instruments to collect data. Robson (2011, p.79) states that one of the features of case study is that data is collected via a range of techniques and typically, though not exclusively producing qualitative data. Inclusion is a process, and this would need to be observed in different arenas in the school system such as the classroom and the sports field. Inclusion also is viewed in different ways by the different stakeholders. For example, to the principal of the school it is more of a policy decision, to not turn away a child who comes for admission, while for the class-teacher inclusion is an operational issue. It was important to observe the school in action and in natural settings over a period of time to arrive at qualitative and descriptive answers to the RQs, thus, making it conducive to adopt case study as a research methodology. Inclusion involves multiple theories and concepts; and depends on people involved in implementing it (as explained in Chapter 2 and 3). These form the undergird for understanding the intent of MPES, in exploring and understanding their processes and the interactions amongst people involved in the school's systems and processes. Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2011) state that interpretive researchers want to understand how concepts and perspectives and roles of people are in a given context; with the focus on context-specific meanings rather than generalized meanings.

5.1.1 Case study

Case study is primarily used in qualitative research and may be focused upon an individual, a group, an organization or a system (Atkins and Wallace, 2012; Cohen *et al*., 2017; Robson, 2011). A case study is generally built around data collected by formalised methods such as interviews or observations and enables the educators and researchers to reflect upon particular instances of educational practice. Case study is defined as 'a specific instance that is frequently used to illustrate a more general principle' (Nisbet and Watt, 1984 in Cohen *et al*., 2017, p.375). The research reported in this thesis is of a school (MPES) that is committed to inclusion. Case study is used as a tool to understand how this school and its systems operate in order to gain insights that may inform future developments. Chong and Graham (2013) in Cohen *et al*., (2017) had proposed a 'Russian-doll approach'. They opine that a case study involves understanding at micro, meso and macro levels. Similarly, data in this study were collected from people at different levels in the organization such as students and teachers, coordinators, vice-principal and principal. Interactions between students and teachers were observed in various spaces such as classroom, art and music class, resource-rooms, sports field and assembly.

Creswell (2019, p.465) defines case study as 'an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., activity, event, process or individuals) based on extensive data collection', and that it is a 'process of inquiry'. And that, bounded could mean time, place or physical boundaries. This case study too was limited by certain factors such as time – for instance, data collection was planned and completed in 5 months; place – counselling sessions and therapy session were not observed and physical boundary – as a researcher I was aware that I had to be passive in observation sessions. One of the aspects of this study involved collecting data from multiple sources of information, choosing data collection instruments, deciding the sequence of data collection and respondents; in other words, it was methodical and not mere collection of data (Robson, 2011, p.136). Atkins and Wallace (2012) explain that most researchers would find that the case study approach is useful for exploring questions which are more complex than simply 'What?' or 'How many?' It provides a way of investigating connections, patterns and context, and of reflecting on the bigger picture as well as on the detail. This is corroborated by Cohen *et al*., (2017) and Robson (2011) who say that case study method is detailed, in-depth, systematic and employs various methods of data collection. These lead to illustrative and vivid real accounts, thus adding to strengths of case study (Cohen *et al.,* 2017). The results are not replicable or generalizable. However, the MoI and the processes followed in MPES can be applicable in other schools too. On similar lines, Cohen *et al.,* (2017, p.378) argues that since case studies are real accounts, their insights can be taken as actionable points in other similar cases as well. Other criticisms of case study are that it could be conducted in a sloppy and incompetent manner (Robson, 2011, p.137) and lack a high degree of control, are impressionistic in nature and easily open to cross-checking (Cohen *et al*., 2017, p.378).

This case study was conducted by paying rigorous attention to design of the study, data collection instruments and data analysis (Section 5.7 and Appendices-1 to 10).

Structure of the school

MPES had a total strength of 360 teachers for 6500 children from nursery to Class-12. This included teachers of academic subjects, special-educators, coordinators, heads-of-department and teachers for extra-curricular activities such as drama, sports, theatre and yoga.

Important details of the school:

I) The school had two main divisions:

Main Divisions	**Classes**	**Sections**
Primary-school	1-5	A to O
High-school (including Middle-school)	6-10 (6-8)	A to O

Table 5.1: Divisions at MPES

II) Every class had a coordinator.

III) Every subject had a head-of-department.

IV) There were a group of teachers for extra-curricular activities.

V) The SpEd team consisted of special-educators and counsellors; and the coordinator.

VI) There were two vice-principals - one for primary-school, (Classes-1 to 5; another for high-school (Classes-6 to 10); and one principal.

VII) As with the majority of schools in India, MPES provides education to children from nursery age until Class-12. However, for the study reported in this thesis, I investigated only Classes-1 to 10. Formal education in India starts at age 6 or Class-1. There are many pre-schools that focus on the 3 to 6 years age group. Similarly, Classes-11 and 12, there are many other formats including pre-university courses. Hence only Classses-1 to 10 were considered for this study.

5.2 Data collection instruments

Table 5.2 illustrates the stages of data collection, the instruments used and the sample size. Data were collected over two phases using questionnaires, interviews and observations. Questionnaires were given only to mainstream-teachers which also included some coordinators and heads-of-departments in Phase-1. It was my intention to conduct interviews with all members of the SpEd team. Phase-2 consisted of observations and interviews. Semi-structured, face-to-face, one-on-one interviews were conducted with teachers, HODs, coordinators, the SpEd team and CW&WOSN. Non-participant observation was conducted over 16 working days (interspersed over the entire data collection period) in the main-classroom, resource-room and pull-out rooms. One section each from Classes-1 to 10 was observed for one full day; and 6 days of observation in the pull-out rooms and resource-room. The class was observed in different spaces such as classroom and sports field; and in different activities including academics, art and music.

Data set for the study	**Questionnaire Phase-1**	**Interviews Phase-2**	**Observations Phase-2**
Teachers	120	31	In total 16 workdays of classroom observation that included pull-out rooms
Coordinators		10	
Heads-of-departments		3	
Counsellors and special-educators	0	12	
Vice-principals	0	2	
Principal	0	1	
Students	0	7	

Table 5.2: Data Set for the Study

Several factors determined the choice of data instruments that were used. The aims of this study were description of SEN and inclusion by MPES; MoI followed by MPES; to explore the systems and processes of the school; and determine the decision-makers in the school at different levels. Descriptive and qualitative data was needed to answer those questions. Some amount of quantitative data was also considered necessary to describe the composition of the school. This research study was conducted by just one person (myself). Managing a full-time job along with the demands of a research study did place constraints on time and effort, and had to be kept in mind. The context being study of a school led to choosing case study as a methodology; which involves multiple methods of data collection (Robson, 2011, p.135). Case study method also implied being in the research environment and constantly soaking information. As head of the institution, the principal had given unconditional access which was a definite advantage for choosing data collection instruments. Trustworthiness, is an important aspect of qualitative research, and was paid due attention (explained in Section 5.6). The focus in interpretative research on contextuality and meaning-making provides a direct methodological rationale for ‘thick descriptions’, that help researchers derive meaning from the context. These rich descriptions are based on empirical data from observation and interviews (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2011).

5.2.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are useful for collecting data from a population in a relatively short time, with minimum effort in distribution as compared to other data collection instruments. This was the first data collection instrument to be deployed in my study (Appendix-1-Questionnaire). Being a stranger to MPES with no interactions with the teachers or children when the research started, it served as a good starting point. It served the purposes of gaining familiarity with the school, to get a broad overview of how teachers looked at inclusion and SEN, the strategies they used and some demographic data. One of the fundamental characteristics of flexible research design is that the researcher is an instrument of data collection (Robson, 2011). It was very important that the teachers in the school saw me as a person who was there to explore and enquire and not criticise them or find fault with them. Keeping these issues in mind, it was decided that questionnaires would be personally administered by me. This also helped in explaining the intent of the study; and the rights and ethical considerations of the research to the participants.

Artino *et al.,* (2014) state that one of the first steps in generating a questionnaire is the undertaking of a literature review which ensures a good understanding of the subject to be scrutinised. This is very important in defining the intent or idea behind the study and in determining if there are any existing scales that have been used in previous investigations that could be used to inform the current investigation. In this study, items for the questionnaire were generated from a review of the literature, and through informal discussions with experts and colleagues in the field. The review of literature pointed to some scales in the field of IE such as the Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002), and the Inclusion Competencies of Indian Teachers Scale (ICIT) (Das *et al.,* 2013). A reading of these scales and their usage revealed that they would not be directly applicable to this research study; however, they served as useful pointers in designing the questionnaire. The Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) has around 500 questions that facilitate in understanding the working of the school. It is intended for use over an extended period of time rather than as an instrument that can provide an immediate analysis of the school. It does not have a dedicated questionnaire for teachers to help in arriving at an initial understanding the opinions of teachers, which was the primary aim of my questionnaire. Das *et al*., (2013) used a two-part questionnaire for their study. Part one gathered background information including questions related to training, experience and access to services. Part two titled 'Inclusion Competencies of Indian Teachers' (ICIT) was a modified version of the 'Essential Teacher Competencies Questionnaire' which was developed by Gear and Gable in the USA in 1979 and consists of 52 items in 10 competency categories. The categories were: (1) professional knowledge concerning exceptional children (2) classroom climate of acceptance (3) communication with parents, community and colleagues (4) assessment of students' needs (5) classroom management (6) goal setting (7) resources for classroom learning (8) instructional techniques (9) personalized curricula (10) evaluation of student progress (Das *et al*., 2013, p.29). It made use of a Likert Scale with responses ranging from not at all competent to highly competent. My initial enquires led me to opine that, questionnaires which were more than 2 pages long and had questions that involved technical answers did not yield a satisfactory response from teachers. Though the categories (in ICIT) were relevant to this study, the research aims were different and focused on systems, processes, leadership of the school and not only on the competency of teachers.

If questionnaires are not well designed, they do not capture the essence of what the survey was meant for. Rattray and Jones (2007) state that item generation, wording and order is a vital aspect in the design of a questionnaire. Attention was paid to the fact that as a researcher no undue demands were made on the participant by designing the questionnaire in such a way that it did not rely excessively on their recall or in understanding the question (Cohen *et al*., 2017). The length of the questionnaire and hence the time taken to complete it can be a huge deterrent in getting high response rates. Keeping this in mind the length of the questionnaire was limited to 2 pages and not more than 20 minutes of time. One of the biggest challenges in wording the questions in a questionnaire is to make sure that all participants interpret these in as close to the same way as is possible (Artino *et al*., 2014). On similar lines Cohen *et al*., (2017) say an inherent issue with questionnaires is that different participants understand the same words differently. On the pragmatic front, the focus in developing effective questions is also in establishing wording that helps to maintain the flow of questions in such a way that they will motivate the participants to answer. The questions should not be controversial or emotive in the beginning of the instrument, thus easing participants into answering the questionnaire (Rattray and Jones, 2007). Keeping these guidelines in mind questions that had demographic data were asked in the beginning of the questionnaire and the technical questions came in later.

The other important decision to be made in constructing a questionnaire is to determine the type of responses which the researcher requires. For example, the use of a Likert-type scale that goes on a continuum from 'I agree' to 'I strongly disagree', or a frequency scale with responses ranging from often to never may be appropriate in some circumstances. Similarly, the development of a multiple-choice response where the participant chooses from multiple options given by the researcher can be effective in some instances. On the other hand, responses could be open-ended, giving the participant a chance to give in-depth responses. Open-ended responses do make data analysis more challenging but often provide rich data (Rattray and Jones, 2007). Along with being aware of pragmatics of the question and the type of responses another important construct to bear in mind was the kind of data and its analysis. Inclusion and SEN as it has been presented several times in this document is a term with various definitions, interpretations and approaches. Hence most of the questions were close-ended with multiple choices. Most questions also had an option where the participant could add on to their choice or write an answer that was not covered in the choices given. Giving a choice of responses and an option that was open-ended made sure that the support given by choices gave the participant an idea of the kind of response that was being sought (Cohen *et al*., 2017). This, served as a useful adjunct to the question and ensured that useable and reliable data was elicited. Close-ended questions with multiple choice questions are quick to complete and don't depend on the articulateness of the participant. But there is the danger of compromising on quality of data. It was made sure that all possible relevant responses were covered and were not overlapping. For example:

> Q8: Based on your experience and knowledge, what is your opinion on including children with special educational needs?

In a question like this it was felt that if responses were not given, teachers would possibly provide a descriptive answer that may lead to an amount of uncertainty in interpreting their answers. Too many answers may lead to a data overload because of the difficulty in summarizing. Response choices had to be framed keeping in mind the necessity not to compromise on richness and breadth of data at the same time make sure that all possible responses would be covered. Hence the responses given were:

a) Have them in the classroom with an additional teacher or a special educator
b) Pull them out for remedial classes in a resource-room
c) Have children with special education needs in a different classroom
d) Other approaches – please specify

When questions are designed with multiple-choice-questions, word and statement order are very important in maintaining reliability of data (Cohen *et al*., 2017). They also say that later responses are given lesser weightage than earlier ones. At the same time, they also suggest that the last item in a list is better remembered than the earlier ones. The order of questions is very important. The questions progressed from general to specific. The type of special needs observed in the classroom and the strategies used were asked after the question on level of awareness (Q4 and Q5, Appendix-1-Questionnaire). Cohen *et al*., (2017) opine that it is important to have a checking mechanism to avoid falsification of responses. Hence questions that came in the later part probed responses of earlier questions. This enabled me to correlate responses. For example:

> Q4: What is your level of awareness of children with special educational needs in your classroom?
>
> Q5: a) what types of special education needs have you observed in the classroom?
>
> b) As a teacher, what are the strategies and methods you use in order to ensure that all students can participate and learn?
>
> Q8: Based on your experience and knowledge, what is your opinion on including children with special educational needs?

While framing questions it was important that I avoid creating a mindset in the participant. Hence question 8 on opinion of placement of CWSN was asked towards the end of the questionnaire. Some questions were open-ended as in

> Q5 ‘What type of special education needs have you observed in the classroom?’.

This ensured that leading answers were not given and the teachers had the flexibility and liberty to describe learners in their own words. Continuity of thought of the participant was also kept in mind. Hence type of special needs observed and strategies used in the classroom were asked as two sub-parts of the same question (Q5 a and b). It was also ensured that every question had only one focus i.e., double-barrelled questions were not used. Thus, the flexibility offered by questionnaires in terms of open-ended versus close-ended was extensively used in designing the questionnaire to get maximum and relevant responses relating to the research aims and questions. One of the disadvantages of a questionnaire is that participants may not take the exercise seriously says Robson (2011). Being present in the school conveyed my seriousness as a researcher and probably was a catalyst to the participants too. Since questionnaires involve written responses there is a chance of bias and not reporting their true beliefs, opinions and views. Robson (2011, p.241) opines that there is a likely to be a 'social desirability response bias'. Care was taken to include follow-up questions for some questions. This challenge was also offset to some extent by conducting classroom observations and face-to-face interviews.

5.2.2 Observation

Observation is a direct qualitative data collection tool in which reliance is on seeing; unlike interview or questionnaire which involves getting a view / opinion from the participant (Robson, 2011, p.316). Unlike questionnaires and interviews that rely on memory and language abilities of participants, observation gives a chance to record data as the action happens. In this study unstructured non-participant observation was used with the primary intent of observing teachers in the classrooms, the strategies used by them, the infrastructure and layout of classrooms and to get a feel of the climate and culture of the school. For example, in the interviews and questionnaires, some teachers mentioned using strategies such as mind-maps and quiz; and observing classes gave further insight into that aspect. Observations is one of the ways to triangulate interview data in qualitative research concur Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005). Unstructured observation gave the flexibility to observe all events in the classroom. The classroom that would be observed by me would be allotted by the coordinator in the morning on the day of the observation. This ensured that the teachers did not have any additional time to prepare because they were to be observed; on the other hand, the coordinator may have chosen the class based on the dynamics of the class. The principal had also made her team aware that they may be observed in some of their sessions by me – while this helped in gaining acceptance in the team; it probably also limited resistance from teachers to being observed. Most coordinators would walk me to the classroom and introduce me as a researcher who was not part of any formal feedback process of the school; and that I had the principal's permission to observe. When the teacher in a classroom changed, the intent (of my observation) was explained to her by me. Two teachers expressed that they were not comfortable, and those sessions were not observed. Care was taken to be as unobtrusive as possible in the classroom, and hence I would be seated behind all the children, most often on a separate bench. Avoiding eye contact with the teacher and students, maintaining a neutral expression and being engaged in writing records helped in deflecting any interest towards me and in being ignored by the teacher and children. The fact that other adults (such as students from colleges, visiting teachers from other schools) observed classrooms in MPES helped in being accepted by the teachers and students as an observer.

Before every observation, the schedule or point of consideration were read by me (Appendix-2-Observation). During observation events were noted as they occurred and a note was made of the layout and physical details of the class (Appendix-2-Observation). A detailed running on-the-spot record of the teacher's instructions, how each class proceeded, responses of a few children, contextual information such as seating arrangements and noise levels were kept. This method is less structured and allows the observer considerable freedom in what information is gathered and how it is recorded (Robson, 2011). On some occasions, clarification was sought from the teachers on some remark they made during the class or about a member of the class. However, there was no interaction with the children of the classroom. Cohen *et al*., (2017, p.544) succinctly say, 'observation is prone to bias in terms of what, why, when, where and how the observer is observing'. Observational effects and observational biases (Robson, 2011, p.328) are two major concerns in this method of data collection. Since there is constant action in classrooms, as an observer I had to be aware of biases such as selective attention, selective encoding, selective memory and interpersonal factors (Robson, 2011, p.328). These were addressed by making a conscious attempt to distribute my attention widely and evenly to avoid paying selective attention towards any child or event. To avoid selective coding of events, there was a determined attempt to keep an open mind and not rush to a judgment during observation. Notes made during the observation, were rewritten at the end of the day on the same day, which helped in keeping it as complete as possible.

Another challenge in observation is to record in a detached and objective manner, and use neutral language when writing records. On the other hand, the observer has an effect on the situation and the participants. In the context of my research, the multiple visits paid to the school by me, and the principal's willingness to participate in this study had made me a familiar figure in the school. Being with the class the whole day and the large size of the class too helped in mitigating this issue, and being ignored while I was in the classroom. As Robson (2011, p.331) states, the disadvantage of an observer affecting the situation can be overcome by '…. habituation or by their being so accustomed to the presence of the observer that they carry on as if she is not there'. The place in the classroom where I chose to sit and observe ensured that there was minimum interaction and eye contact with the group (Robson, 2011, p.331), while ensuring that I did not miss the detail of what was happening (Cohen *et al*., 2017, p.545). These biases and effects also affect the trustworthiness of data (Cohen *et al*., 2017, 561). Hence along with the factors mentioned above, I also had to be conscious of the language used in taking down notes and be factual and objective.

5.2.3 Interview

Interviewing is widely used in qualitative research and typically involves the researcher asking questions, and, hopefully receiving answers. Robson (2011) and Cohen *et al*., (2017) have written quite extensively about interviews and their use in qualitative research methods. The flexibility of interviews in discussing an issue leads to deeper understanding of the same, and renders them more effective than questionnaire in some cases. Interviews are broadly classified as structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Unlike a structured interview, semi-structured interview offers flexibility in the questions and their order. But unlike an unstructured one, there is more focus. In this study, semi-structured interviews were used with all participants. Questions were planned to keep all three aims and RQs in mind (Appendix-3-Interview-Schedule). Since data quality was important and is also affected by time taken for the interview, the questions were framed carefully (Cohen *et al*., p.42). The Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) was referred extensively in framing the questions for the interview. These planned questions were modified during the interview based on the flow, and additional unplanned questions were asked. Hence, there was opportunity to clear misunderstandings, and questioning to explore the issue. These descriptive narratives yielded rich information, which according to Paliokosta and Blandford (2010) is one of the fundamental principles of qualitative research. On the other hand, interviews are time-consuming, and when done on a larger scale, there is the added cost of training interviewers. There is scope for scepticism due to personal opinions in any interview, or to see answers that support the researchers preconceived notions. Our experiences, education and opinions may influence the opinions expressed by participants, and may affect the interpretation of the responses. These are aspects of researcher bias that could have an effect on the reliability of the interview (Cohen *et al*., 2017, p.272). Participants may sometimes tell what they think the interviewer would like to hear; that is interviewee bias may set in according to Cohen *et al*., (2017, p.273). An added concern is both the researcher and participant holding back what they would like to share (Cohen *et al*., 2017, p.507). These were mitigated to some extent by having an indicative schedule of questions and consciously not getting into an interpretative mode during the interviews. A high degree of professionalism was consciously maintained by building a rapport with the participant; choosing places such as an empty classroom or a similar formal space for the interview, instead of informal spaces such as lunch-hall; being aware of my language, words and body language; and not asking leading questions.

To ensure that the interview is objective and expect unbiased views, the questions were kept short for example, ‘what is inclusion according to you? How does that affect achievement?’ instead of ‘What is inclusion and its effect on achievement?’ This also ensured that questions remained open-ended; while it also meant that the data I got was elaborate. Questions that involved jargon and leading questions were avoided (Robson, 2011, p.283). For example, to find out if teachers used inclusive strategies the question asked was ‘what strategies do you use in the classroom?’ When it was felt that data saturation was reached, and questions were repetitive, those questions were not often asked in the subsequent interviews. For instance, the questions eliciting responses to the model of inclusion, role of special-educators, written policy and hierarchy. Interviews were also conducted with CW&WOSN from middle and high-school. Owing to their age, children from primary section were not interviewed. Some key issues that were considered in interviewing children were being aware of how the research would be advantageous to the children. In order to avoid being seen as an authority which may have affected the quality of data (Cohen *et al*., 2017, p.272), each student was informed that this was not a compulsory procedure and that it was not ‘an assessment or a test’. Dissemination of information, especially with younger children was not an easy task; their teachers were involved in helping them understand the purpose of the study.

With older children, the information that the outcomes would be available with the school was shared. Other problems that can affect reliability when children are interviewed are establishing trust; overcoming their shyness and choice of vocabulary and asking questions at the right level (Cohen *et al.*, 2017, p.272). To mitigate this, the option of having a familiar teacher with them during the interview was given to all children.

5.2.4 Phases of data collection:

Data was collected for this study over two phases: Phase-1 consisted of questionnaires and Phase-2 consisted of interviews and observations. Questionnaires were the first data collection instrument to be deployed. This helped in conducting an initial analysis on data from questionnaires, and to prepare an intended list of teachers to be interviewed based on their responses in the questionnaire. Coordinators requested teachers who were free to assemble in a room. The questionnaire was handed to the teachers after running through clauses of informed and voluntary consent, confidentiality and anonymity. Right to withdraw any time through the research was also iterated. The questionnaires were collected from them, within the next half an hour. It was made sure that around 20 questionnaires were distributed for each class. When the questionnaires were being given, 2 to 3 teachers in every group of 15 to 20 teachers declined to fill it in. It was also observed that most teachers did not read the covering note on intent of questionnaire and ethics. They requested me to verbally explain the same. Phase-2 of data collection started with observation. It was felt that an idea about the school day and the climate in the classrooms would be essential to interview teachers. After a week's observation, interviews were started. The primary-school observation and interviews were done first followed by high-school. In between, the pull-out rooms were observed too. The SpEd team was interviewed too during this phase. The time taken to conduct the interview ranged between 30 to 90 minutes. The ethical guidelines were explained to every participant and written consent sought from them before the start of the interview; and before observation.

5.3 Sampling

This research involved sampling at different stages of the study which included:

- Selection of school for case study
- Selection of participants for the different data collection instruments

5.3.1 Selection of the study school

MPES was selected from a wide range of schools in the city of Bengaluru by purposive sampling. In purposive sampling, cases are handpicked based on the presence of a particular characteristic that is being sought (Cohen *et al*., 2017). They identify several reasons in choosing purposive sampling including: to achieve representativeness, to focus on specific cases and to generate theory through gradual accumulation of data from different sources. Bengaluru is a city that has a population of around 10 million people. Rough estimates gathered from informal sources such as newspaper reports suggest that there are a minimum of 2000 registered schools in Bengaluru. In other words, the total population from which a sample school/s had to be selected was a minimum of 2000. Some factors that helped in shortlisting schools were:

- those that had English as the medium of instruction, and had Classes-1 to 10 were considered
- those run by the government and or were aided by the government were not considered; only private schools were considered
- those that had mostly students with parents working in a professional job, or running a business which placed them in middle to higher socio-economic status, were considered
- most students were not first-generation learners
- those that were known in our network of teachers and special-educators to not have an intent to be inclusive were not considered

Early in the project and following advice from my supervisors it was decided to choose a private school as the focus of my study. The nature of the research and case-study methodology used meant that I would need regular and consistent access to the school for at least two terms. Thus, certainty and stability that I would have access to school was a priority and hence a private school to which I had regular and easy access was preferred over a government school. One of the other determining factors was the necessity to consider schools that were considered to be inclusive in their approach. The school selected had a good reputation for its support of children with a range of special educational needs and was keen to receive some evaluation of their work in this regard. When this study school was being seriously considered , the size of the school (6500 children and 360 teachers) and the fact that I was a lone researcher was influential in my rejection of the idea of a multiple school case study, which would have been difficult for me to manage as a part time researcher. My intent was to conduct an in-depth study of the school's systems and processes, explore leadership aspects and investigate the nature of inclusion in the school. This meant spending extended amounts of time in school. Hence, I decided to conduct this research as a single school case study. The representativeness, accessibility and size of the sample – which were main parameters in choosing the study school are explained in the next section of this chapter.

5.3.1.1 Representativeness and Accessibility of the sample

We get a number of enquiries for admission over the course of the academic year in KET, the special school where I work. On examining the educational reports of the child (who is seeking admission) and talking to the child and his/her parents, it is sometimes observed that these children can be included as part of a mainstream school that is supportive of their SEN. We refer them to one of the schools that were considered in the initial stages of this research. Further follow-up showed that these schools admitted these students. Thus, there was a willingness to admit children who previously may have been denied admission to mainstream schools. The organisation where I work runs courses for educators on SEN and inclusion. It was observed that teachers from these schools regularly enrol for these courses. From my interactions with parents and other educators in my capacity as the coordinator of a special school, the impression I got about MPES point to its intent to be inclusive. The principal, vice-principals and some staff members of these schools articulated their support for inclusive policies and practices in my initial interactions with them. This school has been conducting an annual symposium on inclusion and inclusive practices for a few years now. In the exploratory stages of this research, when I was visiting schools to talk to the principal, posters such as the one in Appendix-11, which was prominently displayed in the school corridor represents the importance accorded by MPES to inclusion.

In the exploratory stages of research, there were various responses from principals of various schools that were being considered. One principal granted an interview after much following up and said that he would need the approval of the management to discuss the details of my research. Another principal informed that the teachers could not be interviewed as a school policy. Another school was very eager to participate in the research, but this school was not a 'typical' Indian school. Though they adhered to the CISCE board, their approach to teaching and education was very different. For example, they did not use textbooks prescribed by the board till high-school. This school also had a vertical grouping for its students from Classes-2 to 7. Thus, though there was access to the school, it was not representative of a typical school in Bengaluru. Another school that was ready to grant access had a different intake of students. The number of children in the school who came from economically under privileged backgrounds was much more than a typical urban school. MPES, was responsive from the beginning, all initial communication was clear and direct. The first meeting with the principal was quite productive. The formalities, broad strategies and intent of the research were discussed. The next steps including documents needed for a formal approval, the team with whom I would have to interact if formal approval was received were clearly articulated. Hence, accessibility was a definite advantage with MPES.

5.3.1.2 Size of the sample

In Bengaluru, the number of children in individual schools varies tremendously from 100 to a few thousands. The schools considered had different number of students ranging from 350 to 6500 children. In the initial stages of the research, one of the decisions that needed to be taken was the number of schools that would be studied. One of the design choices was to compare and contrast two schools that had between 300 to 400 children, another possibility was to take a large school (involving more than 3000 children) and arrive at the MoI followed. MPES had a student strength of about 6500 children. The number of children in a classroom in this school, as in a typical classroom in India, was between 30 and 40. From experience and interactions with other educators in the field; and with the high student population at MPES – there was a high probability that there would be CWSN, diagnosed and undiagnosed, in most classrooms. The prevalence rate of children with LD is 10.25%, according to a study conducted in Bikaner, India by Choudhary *et al*., (2012). As a researcher, I was motivated to investigate the processes adopted by this large school in its intent to make it inclusive. The size of the school also meant that the research would be based upon a single-school case study.

5.3.2 Sample size and strategy for participants in MPES

Sample size, representativeness, and access to the sample were key factors considered to arrive at the sampling strategy to be employed. The probability that some teachers may not consent to being interviewed or observed, or may not want to fill in a questionnaire were considered. Sequential mixed methods sampling, in which one kind of sample precedes another and influences the sample to follow was chosen (Cohen *et al*., 2017, p.224). The first step in sequential sampling was random stratified sampling for the questionnaire. In the next stage, random stratified sampling was used for observations; purposive sampling and random sampling were used for interviews (Table 5.3). Initial data analysis of questionnaires helped in choosing samples for interviews.

Stratum / group	**Number of teachers**	**Sample for questionnaire by stratified random sampling**	**Sample for class observation by stratified random sampling**	**Sample for interviews by purposive and random sampling**
Class-1	157	56	1G	15
Class-2			2A	
Class-3			3F	
Class-4			4A	
Class-5			5C	
Class-6	97	54	6D	16
Class-7			7H	
Class-8			8E	
Class-9			9I	
Class-10			10N	
Coordinators	10	Included with teachers	none	10
HODs	7	Included with teachers	none	3

Table 5.3: Sampling size and strategy of teachers

Note: Besides this, 7 interviews (with 16 CW&WOSN) and individual interviews with all the 12 teachers in the SpEd team, 2 vice-principals and the principal were conducted.

Each of the Classes-1 to 10 of MPES was considered as a stratum for questionnaires (i.e., Class-1 was a stratum, Class-2 a stratum). Around 20 questionnaires each were distributed to these strata thus obtaining a random stratified sample. Random stratified sampling was followed for observation of classrooms. In every class, one section was randomly allotted by the coordinator and non-participant observation was conducted for the entire duration of the school day. The next stage in the sampling was choosing teachers for interview. An analysis of questionnaire data on the working of the school, its processes, teaching methods and strategies yielded a purposive sample for interviews (Table 5.4). However, not all teachers who were identified could be interviewed. Thus, representation across several parameters including number of years of experience of teachers, their qualifications and their role in the system (class-teacher, subject-teacher, extra-curricular activities teacher) the different divisions in the school (nursery, primary and high), teacher's opinions on SEN, inclusion and placement of CWSN, and teachers' thoughts and expectations of special-educators was ensured. A purposive sample does not represent a wider population, however would provide detailed, in-depth and rich data and the results may not be generalizable was kept in mind (Cohen *et al.*, 2017; Creswell, 2019). The coordinators of all classes, both vice–principals and principal, and the entire SpEd team were interviewed. Some teachers were also interviewed as a random sample. Three teachers did not consent for the interview, the reasons given were that they were not sure of the confidentiality, were not sure of themselves and that they were not obligated to do it. During my conversations with teachers and coordinators, it was found that some of them were not sure of their responses and hence mentioned that they would not like to be interviewed in the questionnaires. After shortlisting teachers, consent was again sought from them before the interview. CW&WOSN were interviewed; most CWOSN were a purposive sample of class-monitors and school prefects; while most CWSN were a random sample based on their availability in the resource-room.

Teachers shortlisted from based on their responses in the questionnaire		
Name	**Consent available**	**reason for interview**
Interview based on their comments		
Hanna	no	interesting strategies such as learning styles, activities, taking responsibility in the class
Ramya	no	coordinator; talks about audio and video methods for learning
Dasu	yes	uses the words counsellor students, what does that mean?
Shubha	yes	Hindi teacher
Noor	not answered	conflicting answers on placement of CWSN
Reshma	Will decide	interesting responses such as should not scold CWSN, they maybe talented
Jolie	Will decide	CCA coordinator for Classes-4 and 5, planned activities, communication
Nisha	yes	responses indicate a positive attitude and a host of good strategies
Maddy	yes	Not aware of role of special-educators, because they take children to their own room
Purva	yes	Detailed listing of SEN
Mahesh	yes	Music teacher
Would like to interview because they prefer CWSN to be in a different classroom		
Amba	yes	
Priya	yes	said English is essential for understanding any subject
Garima	yes	Hindi teacher
Would like to interview because they prefer CWSN to go to a resource-room		
Poonam	no	crisp responses
Jaan	no	confusing responses
Dana	yes	mentioned she is aware of CWSN, but does not know how to address their needs

Table 5.4: Teachers shortlisted to be interviewed on the basis of questionnaires

5.4 Piloting

The research reported in this thesis used a case study methodology, but a complete pilot study was not feasible. According to Robson (2011, p.141), ‘a pilot study is a small-scale version of the real thing, a try-out of what you propose’. There were several factors including time, money and effort needed to conduct a pilot case study, accessibility for the purpose of piloting and the fact that each school practices inclusion in a distinct way that rendered it unfeasible to conduct a pilot case study. Robson (2011, p.141) states that while piloting case study research may be difficult; it was less important. Feedback received from participants who complete the instrument helps in modifying the instruments based on those concerns (Creswell 2019, p.390); thus, placing an emphasis on piloting the individual instruments. The questionnaire designed specifically for this study was piloted on two teachers; one who had about 10 years of experience and the other with 2 years of experience. They were working in different schools and not in MPES. Care was taken to ensure that the teachers were chosen from schools that were comparable with MPES in features such as an intent to be inclusive in approach and had special-educators.

One question was revised after the questionnaire was piloted. When the data from both the filled-in questionnaires were scanned, it was noticed that there was no question that would elicit a response on the types of SEN observed in the classroom. Hence question 5 which was

> Q5: As a teacher, what are the strategies and methods you use in order to ensure
> that all students can participate and learn?

in the pilot, was changed to

> Q5: a) what types of special education needs have you observed in the classroom?
> b) As a teacher, what are the strategies and methods you use in order to ensure that
> all students can participate and learn?

in the final version of the questionnaire.

Both teachers who filled in the questionnaire confirmed that it did not take them more than 15 minutes to complete it. The wording and order of the questions also was found appropriate. Further they said they did not face any ambiguity in the questions that had multiple responses.

Getting access to observe a classroom on a pilot basis was difficult. Based on my experience and literature on classroom observation, an observation schedule (Appendix-2-Observation) was devised to ensure a clear focus on proceedings of the class. The schedule was verified by a class-teacher and a special-educator, both not from MPES. A minimum of 40 interviews were planned. Robson (2011) indicates that in flexible research design, piloting is incorporated in the study itself. Hence the need for a pilot interview and observation was attenuated to some extent. The initial interviews helped in refining the procedure for subsequent interviews.

5.5 Ethical considerations:

Ethical considerations were paid due attention to and followed strictly to ensure that the interests and concerns of participants were safeguarded right from the early stages of research. The research was subject to scrutiny by the University of Northampton (UoN) research ethics committee from whom approval to proceed was obtained. I had to clear two courses on ethics – Good Research Practice and Becoming an Ethical Researcher – to get a complete understanding of ethics while conducting investigations on people in real life. These courses had theory on ethics and many case studies that helped me improve my knowledge on the importance of being ethical at all times during the research process. The ethical policies on codes and procedures, research integrity and misconduct prescribed by UoN (UoN ethics policy, 2018) and the ethical guidelines for educational research by BERA (2018) were adhered to. In the Indian context, while it is possible to obtain frameworks and guidance for ethics from the hard sciences, and particularly medicine (Gangopadhyay., *et al*., 2020; Sharma, 2022); ethical considerations in educational research have received less attention (Rose and Malkani, 2021).

Informed and voluntary consent was sought from all participants (BERA, 2018, p.9). It was also made clear to the participants that they could withdraw at any time during the data collection stage (BERA, 2018, p.18 and Appendix-1-Questionnaire). The exploratory nature of the study was clearly explained to all participants before data collection, and a copy of it was given to them (Appendix-1-Questionnaire), this also ensured that they did not grant consent under the impression that this might be an intervention. Participants were also informed the outcomes of the research and how it could be addressed (BERA, 2018, p.8). As a researcher I was sensitive to the fact that some children may have difficulties in understanding the nature of research and its intentions. Opportunities were presented to them to clear their doubts and in understanding ethical principles such as right to withdraw; and voluntary and informed consent with the support of their teachers. BERA (2018, p.10) advices that in such situations consent should be negotiated within relationships of mutual trust. BERA (2018, p.10) also adds that sometimes it is important that the researcher approached the gatekeeper before directly approaching the participants; hence children were approached with teachers only after the teachers had briefed them about the study. Additionally, it was also conveyed to the children that this was not an assessment or test. As a researcher I was on alert to stop the observation or intervention, when any signs of distress were to be exhibited by the student. Children below 10 to 11 years of age were not involved in interviews. I was concerned to ensure that only children who had considerable experience of the processes and systems of the school and who would be able to contribute to the questions that were primarily based on the inclusive nature of the school would be involved.

The actual name of the participants, or the institution was not used anywhere to preserve their anonymity, privacy and confidentiality; and data was not shared for non-academic purposes (BERA, 2018, p.21). Confidentiality and anonymity were of utmost importance even in data storage and in publication such as seminars. Data was reported as found, without altering the findings. Participants were informed that a transcript of the interview and observation would be shared with them on request. Data analysis was done following strict procedures and with objectivity. Care was taken to not ask leading questions during interviews, not share personal opinions and views and to use appropriate and unbiased language during reporting. Multiple perspectives and contrary findings were also reported as part of the thesis (Creswell, 2014).

5.6 Establishing trustworthiness in the study

According to Robson (2011), flexible design poses some threats to the validity of research mainly in the areas of description, interpretation and theory. Attention was given during the design of data collection instruments and in the administering stages as explained in the previous sections. Data collected during interviews were audio-taped, transcribed and cross-checked to ensure that they were accurately transcribed. Care was taken to not selectively record interviews and to consistently code responses in order to maintain reliability at the data analysis stages (Cohen *et al*., 2017, p. 272 and Section 5.7). All participants were informed that their audio-record and transcript would be made available to them, if they would like to verify or change what they had shared. The main threat to interpretation is by ‘imposing a framework on what is happening rather than this occurring or emerging from what you learn during your involvement with the setting’ (Robson, 2011, p.156).

In this study too, there was a thematic framework based on review of literature; however, changes were made to themes based on emerging data, which adds to the flexible design aspect of the study (Section 5.1). When the thematic framework was being designed, work of multiple authors such as Loreman, Florian, and Booth and Ainscow from different countries and from UNESCO was considered. Thematic analysis was conducted in a consistent and exhaustive manner as described in Section 5.7 in order to maintain high standards of trustworthiness in the research. Trustworthiness of data collected is extremely crucial to increase the quality of the research study. For example, in response to questions on strategies used, teachers mentioned peer support as a means of including children. Classes were observed to see how peer support was being used in the classroom. Interviewing teachers gave detailed inputs on views of different teachers on peer support and effectiveness and challenges of the same. Thus, collecting data from multiple sources, and using multiple data collection instruments, not only enhanced richness of data, but was also a way of increasing reliability of data. This increases confidence in findings (Olsen, 2004 in Robson, 2011). Thus, triangulation of data was done by using more than one method of data collection, and by using multiple sources of information, in the process enhancing the accuracy of the study (Creswell, 2019). According to (Nowell et al., 2017) systemic data analysis that includes a clear description of analysis tools and methods, assumptions made and disclosing these with enough detail increases the trustworthiness of qualitative research.

5.7 Data analysis

A key component of qualitative data analysis is that data and theory need to be carefully explored and compared to establish a common ground for interpretation (Bostrom, 2019). Coding and developing a thematic framework are central to many qualitative data analyses; and themes need not necessarily originate from one theoretical framework (Robson, 2011). Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005) concur that thematic analysis is an important part of interpretive qualitative research. Braun and Clarke (2006) sum it up and state that thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research tool that potentially provides a rich and detailed account of data; they also highlight the theoretical freedom whereby data may be interrogated from a range of perspectives provided by thematic analysis. Data analysis consisted of various phases as shown in Table 5.5.

Phase	Description of the Process
Phase 1: Generating initial themes	Generating initial set of themes based on an initial review of literature, parameters that arose from my experience in the field of study and context of study (explained in Chapter 4)
Phase 2: Familiarizing with the data	Transcribing data, reading and re-reading data, attaching meaning to data
Phase 3: Generating initial set of codes	Generating an initial set of codes based on a sample of interviews, questionnaires and observation
Phase 4: Segmenting data and refining codes	Data were segmented broadly according to RQ; codes were finalized during this process
Phase 5: Sort data according to RQ and assign codes	Data were separated according to RQ and codes attached to relevant utterances
Phase 6: Forming themes	Collating codes into potential final themes keeping in mind RQ and forming reporting structure for findings
Phase 7: Refining themes	Refining into final themes to be able to report findings and connect findings to discussion based on RQ
Phase 8: Writing the analysis	Selection of findings to present, relating to analysis with respect to RQ and literature, explore contribution from my study

Table 5.5: Phases of Data Analysis

Phase 1: Generating Initial themes:

An initial thematic framework was arrived at based on the three studies (Loreman, 2014; Index for Inclusion by Booth and Ainscow, 2002; and UNESCO, 2017), parameters that arose from experience in the field of education and the context of the study (Table 4.1, Section 4.3 and Table 5.6, Column 1). As data were collected, they were analysed and themes were changed, rearranged and refined (Phases 6 and 7 in Table 5.5). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a recursive process and not a linear one; involving movement between different phases as needed. Thus, the thematic framework was both theory-driven and data-driven (Robson, 2011, p.479). Braun and Clarke (2006) succinctly point out that an early reading of literature might narrow the researcher's vision and focus on some aspects, while ignoring others; alternatively, the advantage may be sensitizing the researcher to more subtle feature of data. As an example, in this study engaging with the literature and being aware of the general functioning of schools in India helped in being sensitive to features that might have otherwise been missed such as a written school policy; and the prevalence of continuum of services in IE in other countries. However, it had to be kept in mind that a pre-conceived notion may lead to ignoring data and bias towards some aspects of data. As an example, in the early stages of design participation, achievement, inclusion and exclusion were different themes. As data was analysed, it was felt that it would be difficult to discuss these as separate themes, hence they were merged into one theme as indicators of inclusion – participation, achievement and social inclusion. To mitigate the risk of ignoring potentially crucial aspects of data, as a researcher I made a deliberate effort to move back and forth between the data set, coded extracts of data and thematic framework. Braun and Clarke (2006, p.78) draw attention to the concern that an absence of clear and concise guidelines in thematic analysis means that the 'anything goes' critique of qualitative research. The phases followed as mentioned in Table 5.5 helped in critical data analysis. The process of reorganization of raw data into themes was also done meticulously (see Phases 3 to 7 below) in order to address this concern.

Phase 2: Familiarizing with the data

Questionnaire data were filled into a table format from the paper and pencil format (Appendix-5-Questionnaire-Collated). This helped in getting numerical data and in building a purposive sample for interviews. Every interview was transcribed; played again and cross-checked (Appendix-6-Interview Transcript). This process of transcription helped in enabling me to become familiar with data and attach meanings to them. Braun and Clarke (2006, p.88) argue that data transcription is a 'key phase of data analysis within interpretative qualitative methodology', and not just a time-consuming and mechanical process. The log of observation of classrooms noted down in my book, were typed into the computer on the very same day (Appendix-2-Observation).

Phases 3 and 4: Generating initial set of codes; and, Segmenting data and generating final set of codes

The first set of codes were generated after forming a general idea from the interview transcripts. A sample of around 15 interviews, a couple of observations and collated questionnaire data were re-read again keeping these codes in mind. It was then felt that some codes needed to be changed or added. The rule of ‘include rather than exclude’ (Robson, 2011. p.478) was followed; i.e., if there was a doubt regarding the relevance of a data, it was included in these stages. On similar lines, Braun and Clarke’s (2006, p.89) general guidelines on coding include: code for many potential themes; code inclusively, that is keep some surrounding data in order to retain context; and code individual extracts in different themes. Consequently, 10 interviews and 1 class observation were segmented according to RQs, codes applied to utterances (Appendix-7-Observation-Coded) and then a final list of codes (Appendix-4-Codes) was arrived at. All the data was then segmented according to RQs.

These are examples of how codes were finalized through the different stages of the study.

1) St was one of the initial codes developed to indicate strategies used by teachers. Later it was considered to change it to St+, St- and StP to indicate strategies that may lead to a positive outcome; a negative outcome and specifically to enhance participation respectively. As more teachers were interviewed, they shared the strategies that children used. Hence this code was changed to StT to indicate any strategies used by teachers, StS strategies used by students and participation was included as a separate code.
2) Collaboration was part of StT code in the initial stages. Continued analysis of data showed that collaboration, or lack of collaboration was an emerging theme. Hence collaboration was included as a separate code.
3) Some codes such as collaboration, StT, participation – included data that indicated that this event was present and to also indicate absence of the event.
4) Some utterances/observations appeared important but did not fit into any code. These were grouped under the code SPL.
5) Sometimes individual data was applicable to more than one RQ, and was assigned different codes.
6) Validation of codes with literature: Reading literature with the emergent themes in mind helped me ensure that an overall view of the themes and their relationship to the broader study area was taken. For example, in the area of strategies, while there were utterances (from interviews) from children that indicated strategies used by both teachers and children to access learning;, I was able to identify literature that also highlighted these strategies, such as the importance of including students’ voices in any study on inclusion.

Phase 5: Sort data according to RQ and assign codes

In this phase data were separated according to RQ and codes assigned to each utterance (Appendix-8-RQ1-Interview-Coded). The entire utterance was retained to ensure that context was not lost.

Phase 6: Reviewing themes

The initial themes had been formed in Phase 1 by a careful reading of literature, based on my experience and initial impressions from data. In the process of applying codes to all utterances, these themes were revisited and revised as necessary. This process of collapsing codes into final themes also helped in considering the thematic framework from the theory and data points of view. Sub themes such as Policy and Disability v/s Difference were not retained due to lack of data to report about these themes. The theme Exclusion was grouped with Inclusion and not separately. Braun and Clarke (2006) assert that in this stage some themes may be dropped, separated or collapsed into other themes.

Phase 7: Refining themes

Presenting data in a lucid manner and connecting the findings to themes that in turn would be discussed in the context of the research aims drove this final step of refining themes. Codes were grouped to both present themes for findings and for the final discussion of themes. Themes were grouped into four main findings (Chapters 6 to 9; Table 5.6, Column 2). Discussion themes too were arrived at (Table 5.6, Column 3). Table 5.7 explains how codes were grouped for one theme, and its connection with the RQ. The indicators of inclusion, such as , participation, achievement and social inclusion provided a main theme in answering the first research question (How is the school defining inclusion and SEN?). While participation, achievement and inclusion were codes; other associated codes including expectations, exclusion, acceptance, participation and opportunities also informed this theme.

RQ1: How is MPES describing inclusion and SEN? RQ2: What are the provisions made by MPES to include children with SEN? RQ3: Who are the influential people in decision-making and practice in developing IE in this school?		
Themes based on Literature	**Findings – grouped into themes, based on data**	**Discussion themes**
• Description of SEN • Model of Inclusion • Participation, achievement and social inclusion and exclusion • School and classroom practices • Processes • Teacher training • Teacher attitude • School culture • Collaboration and shared responsibility • Leadership • Disability v/s Difference • Policy	Findings#1: Structures, Processes and Practices at MPES • Model of Inclusion • Processes • School and classroom practices • Teacher training Findings#2: Indicators of Inclusion • Description of SEN • Participation, achievement and social inclusion Findings#3: Culture at MPES • School culture • Collaboration and shared responsibility • Teachers attitudes Findings#4: Leadership style • People involved in decision-making and practising inclusion • Leadership – aspects and types	• Model of Inclusion • Description of SEN • School and classroom practices • Indicators and dimensions of inclusion (participation, Achievement and social inclusion) • Culture, teacher attitudes, collaboration and sharing responsibility • Leadership

Table 5.6: Thematic Framework

Code number	Code	Code description	Theme	What are the main points related to this theme?	How do my findings for this theme inform my research questions/aims?
13	Expectations	Expectations from teachers of students	Participation, achievement and social inclusion	Participation, achievement and social inclusion as standalone parameters; the interrelationship between these parameters; role of other associated parameters such as acceptance, exclusion, expectations, opportunities and sense of belonging	Participation, achievement and social inclusion are important indicators of inclusion This theme discusses a part of RQ1
14	Achievement	How do teachers define achievement, how is it measured, what is the connection between inclusion and achievement?			
15	Inclusion/Exclusion	Events or statements or strategies that indicate inclusion or exclusion, both in the classroom, in extra-curricular activities, socially			
17	Acceptance	Opinions on acceptance of children, including statements on teasing			
21	Participation	Teachers and students view on participation and provisions for the same, includes statements connected to sense of belonging			
22	Opportunities	Teachers and students view on opportunities and provisions for the same			

Table 5.7: Codes to Themes Map for one theme

Phase 8: Writing the analysis

From the vast amount of data, narratives and observations were carefully chosen to both broadly answer the aims of the research and to capture the essence of the point I was trying to demonstrate. Thus, while narratives showcased and presented rich data, analysing several narratives together helped in explaining the theme and supporting my arguments. Several narratives also helped in connecting across themes. In choosing the extracts, I was conscious that I may fail to analyse some relevant data, which is a potential disadvantage of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Revisiting raw data several times helped in mitigating this. I had to also be aware that the extracts of data supported the analysis or in other words the theme (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Repeated reviewing of work, retaining multiple examples before finally deciding on one helped in ensuring this match between data and theme being written about.

5.8 Chapter summary

This study is predominantly qualitative in nature, with some quantitative data and was based on case study methodology. Questionnaires, interviews and observations were used in a phased manner to collect data. Stratified random sampling and purposive sampling were used. The thematic framework was derived based both on theory and data. Codes and themes for data analysis were based on literature and emerging data. Findings are presented in the next four chapters (Chapter 6 to 9) under various themes.

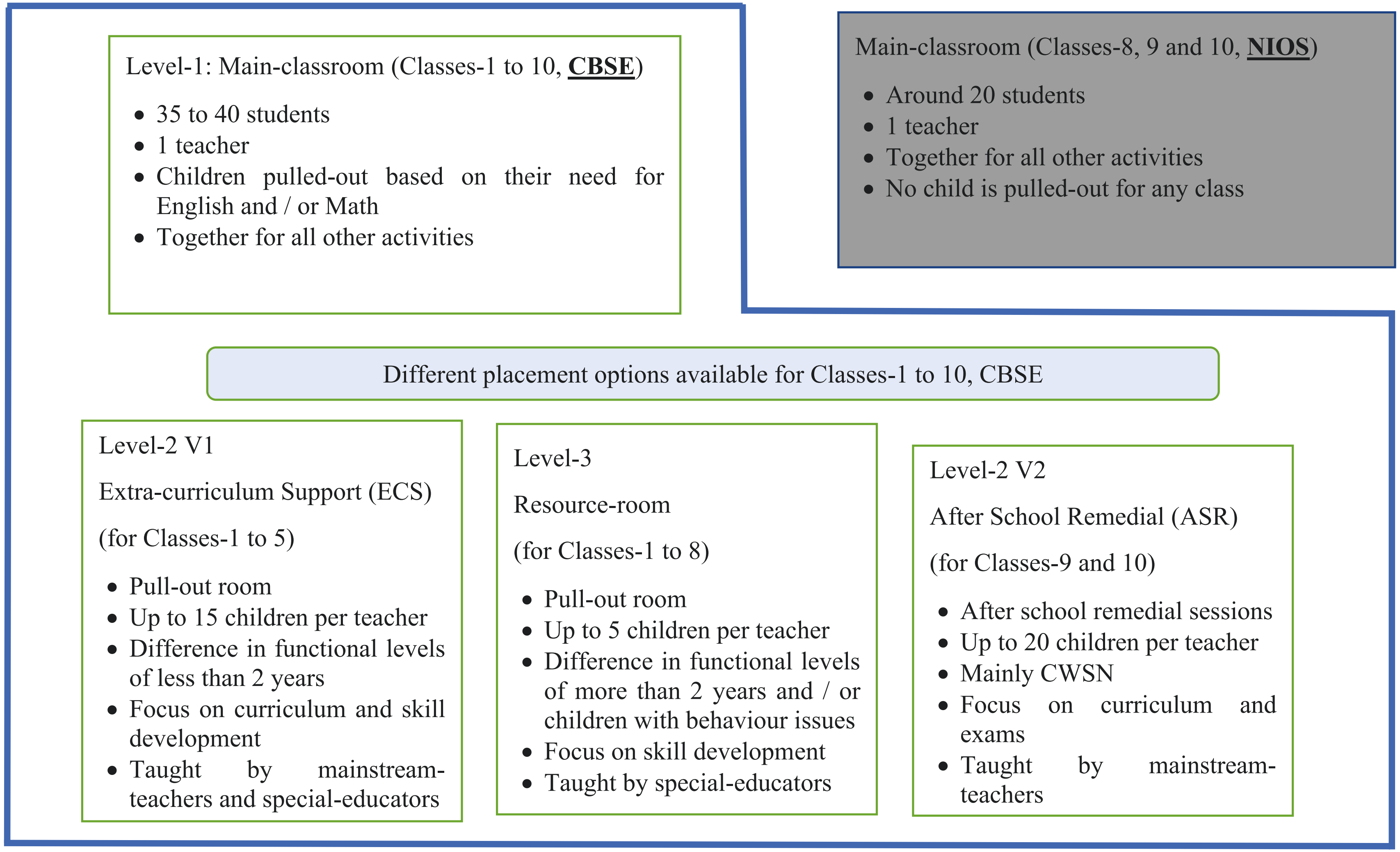
Chapter 6: Findings - Structures, Processes and Practices at MPES

This chapter outlines the model of inclusion followed at MPES; and processes and practices at the school and classroom level. Views by teachers on the placement of CWSN are also presented.

6.1 Model of inclusion followed in MPES

MPES's team of teachers consisted of mainstream-teachers (class-teachers, subject-teachers, extra-curricular and co-curricular teachers) and a SpEd team (special-educators and counsellors). The terms counsellor and special-educator were used interchangeably at MPES. Special-educators were involved in academic remedial sessions, whereas counsellors were involved with counselling children and conducting life skill classes. Each class has a coordinator, every subject has a head-of-department referred to as HOD. The coordinators and HODs also had teaching responsibilities. According to the principal, coordinators were like principals for their classes (typically every class, for example Class-1 had around 300 children, and there was a Class-1 coordinator; hence every coordinator was like a principal). Some typical responsibilities of coordinators were teacher allocation and management, student allocation, tracking children's progress and scheduling PTMs. Some main responsibilities of HODs were ensuring curriculum preparation and completion, planning for the academic year, following the regulations of the board of education and setting question papers. Every subject had a subject-representative. For example, the English subject-representative for Class-6 would be in touch with all English teachers of Class-6; once the lesson-plan was in place, she was responsible for ensuring all teachers have it, adhere to it, and solve any challenges that teachers may have in its implementation.

MPES followed a multilevel MoI consisting of main-classrooms and pull-out rooms (ECS-class and resource-room) to reach out to diverse learners. In CBSE, there were 3 levels in Classes-1 to 5, and 2 levels in Classes 6-10. Additionally for Classes-8 to 10, NIOS board was offered. CWSN and children who were not able to attend school regularly opted for NIOS and were in a separate classroom, there were no pull-out rooms for Classes-8 to 10 NIOS. (Diagram-6.1 and 6.2). Right from the inception of MPES, every class had a section that consisted of children from socially-disadvantaged homes and marginalized categories, known as the RTE section. According to VP1, one of the missions of the management of MPES was to educate the underprivileged. After the RTE (2009) act was passed, it was mandatory for all schools to have children from social-disadvantaged homes. This section was in the same building as other classes, teachers were from the same common pool of teachers. The facilities of the school were accessible to the children of the RTE section too, and they participated in the common extra-curricular activities such as annual day and sports day.



Level-1: Main-classroom (Classes-1 to 10, **CBSE**)

- 35 to 40 students
- 1 teacher
- Children pulled-out based on their need for English and / or Math
- Together for all other activities

Main-classroom (Classes-8, 9 and 10, **NIOS**)

- Around 20 students
- 1 teacher
- Together for all other activities
- No child is pulled-out for any class

Different placement options available for Classes-1 to 10, CBSE

Level-2 V1

Extra-curriculum Support (ECS)

(for Classes-1 to 5)

- Pull-out room
- Up to 15 children per teacher
- Difference in functional levels of less than 2 years
- Focus on curriculum and skill development
- Taught by mainstream-teachers and special-educators

Level-3

Resource-room

(for Classes-1 to 8)

- Pull-out room
- Up to 5 children per teacher
- Difference in functional levels of more than 2 years and / or children with behaviour issues
- Focus on skill development
- Taught by special-educators

Level-2 V2

After School Remedial (ASR)

(for Classes-9 and 10)

- After school remedial sessions
- Up to 20 children per teacher
- Mainly CWSN
- Focus on curriculum and exams
- Taught by mainstream-teachers

Diagram-6.1: Placement options

CBSE

MoI: Classes-1 to 5

Level-1: Main-classroom
Level-2 V1: ECS
Level-3: Resource-room

Need based counselling

MoI: Classes-6 to 8

Level-1: Main-classroom
Level-3: Resource-room

Need based counselling

MoI: Classes-9 and 10

Level-1: Main-classroom
Level-3: After school remedial

Need based counselling

NIOS

MoI: Classes-8 to 10

Main-classroom
- Around 15 students
- 1 teacher
- Together for all activities
- No child is pulled-out of the class

Need based counselling

Diagram-6.2: Model of Inclusion at MPES

Children were pulled-out of the main-classroom in English and/or math period based on the intensity of their needs; parental consent was mandatory to be pulled-out. The pull-out rooms had charts, spelling lists and learning aids on the walls (Appendix-12); these were not seen in the main-classrooms. All children were together the rest of the day for other periods and activities such as social studies, science, sports, art and craft, lunch and assembly. Academic functioning levels of children who were pulled-out were established by informal assessments by the SpEd team. After an informal assessment, a formal diagnosis of SEN was recommended if needed. Formal assessments were done by organizations recognized by CBSE/NIOS. Formal assessments were necessary to avail accommodations Class-6 onwards. Accommodations such as extra time for completing the assessment, leniency in spellings, reader and scribe in assessments, photocopied notes, preferential seating in the classroom and usage of an electronic device such as a tab to take down notes were provided.

Behaviour was an important determinant for the pull-out classes, children whose behaviour disrupted the class were in the resource-room and not ECS-class. ECS-class was conducted by mainstream-teachers who had expressed inclination to work with this group or were recommended by the coordinators based on their attitude and awareness of SEN or special-educators; while resource-room sessions were conducted by special-educators. In the ECS-class the focus was on completing as much curriculum as possible. Curriculum, instruction and evaluation methods were differentiated. In the resource-room the focus was on building academic skills such as reading, spelling, writing and math. Curriculum was modified for content and volume, and assessment papers were based on that. For some children in the resource-room, special-educators focused on behaviour management, and building skills such as attention to task and task completion. The intent in the ECS-class (Level-2 V1) was to bridge the gap between chronological age and functioning age, which would enable the child to be part of the regular classroom. The intent in resource-room (Level-3) was to equip them with language and math skills, and sometimes appropriate classroom behaviour in order to move to Level-2 V1 where there was more focus on curriculum. The aim of the school was to have a movement of children from Level-3 to 2 to 1.

The Level-2 V2 sessions in Classes-9 and 10 were conducted after school hours by subject-teachers themselves, additional periods were allotted for each subject after school hours. Typically, there were around 10 to 15 children in the class. This was conducted after school for CWSN with parental consent to attend the same; and for children with low-average scores or who were irregular to school due to reasons such as an illness, or were seriously engaged in some extra-curricular activity like a sport or music that required them to miss regular classes. Teachers shared that all questions were discussed in class, but only the important questions were taken up in the remedial classes. Despite remedial classes and accommodations some children found the CBSE difficult. These children were advised to take the NIOS board in Classes-8, 9 and 10, based on the recommendations in the formal assessment. The NIOS board permits children to complete Class-10 in 5 years. Thus, findings reveal that MPES followed a multilevel system. Till Class-8, children were together in the main-classroom for most parts of the day, and they were pulled-out for English and / or math. Class-8 onwards children who pursue the NIOS board of examination were in a separate class. Behaviour was one of the important criteria to place the child in the resource-room.

6.1.1 Teachers views on placement

Vignette-6#1 depicts typical views of teachers on placement of CWSN.

Vignette-6#1

> *These kids (CWSN) also should get a chance to mingle with other kids. They should be given a chance to learn and inculcate what other normal children are doing. If you are keeping them alone, deprive them from such environment, then we are keeping them aloof. If you have such a child at home, will you keep them away from others? And not let others mingle with them? (Ahana).*
>
> *I think if there is extreme behaviour, a separate classroom is better for CWSN. Otherwise, everybody is affected, other children, the affected child and the at-risk children (Sheena).*
>
> *I sometime think they should be in main-classroom. But sometimes it doesn't work. In a class of 40 children, even if we get to know there is a child who is different, how do we address it? In 40 minutes, how do I give special attention to that child, I am not able to. If I go to that child, how do I control the others? These days children don't have patience, I have to do so many things in an English class. Though they say these kids (CWSN) must mingle with the rest, I feel they should be in a different class, I would love to teach them, I will go down to their level. They will learn much better. In fact, I learn quite a lot (Priya).*
>
> *A CWSN (named J) would roam around in class even when I was teaching, trouble others, hit others. He was the most problematic child I have seen. After 7th he joined NIOS. In NIOS-class he was not like that, he was quite settled and he*

> *didn't trouble. Maybe the smaller class helped him, maybe because he had grown up, he wanted to study. So, my opinion is divided on placement. It depends on the kind of problem there is, if I can use that word - problem. Kids like J cannot be managed in the classroom. There was one more child who would not listen to instructions at all who doesn't write anything. He dances whenever I look at him. But the thing is we can still get him to do work (Mira).*

It is evident from Vignette-6#1 that teachers have divergent views on inclusion and placement of CWSN. While teachers raised the issue of right of children to be with all; they also expressed the dilemma of teachers not being able to reach out to all children. Concern about behaviour of CWSN disrupting the class and a deciding factor for pull-out classes emerged. The lack of appropriate vocabulary when teachers spoke about inclusion and related issues was apparent.

6.2 Processes

Interviews with teachers revealed that MPES had standard processes that most teachers were aware of. Some important ones were:

6.2.1 Preparation of curriculum

The CBSE does not mandate a syllabus that needs to be adhered to until Class-6, hence MPES used its own discretion in formulating the syllabus. Nancy explained it in detail, and said that textbooks for all subjects had questions in every lesson that were graded from easy to hard. Besides this, worksheets with a combination of easy, moderate and difficult questions were made. Lessons were prepared with additional resource material and assessment sheets. Field trips to museums and heritage places, movies and documentaries were included wherever applicable. Some examples cited were a visit to the Vidhana Soudha (the state government operates from here) and the High Court as part of political science in Classes-9 and 10; and on a learning trip and clean-up drive to a nearby fort as part of environmental studies. These instances indicate that preparation of curriculum was an important task at MPES.

6.2.2 Assessments

The CBSE did not mandate exams in primary and middle-school, MPES used this flexibility and conducted assessments with fewer lessons for Classes-1 and 2. Class-3 onwards two tests a year were conducted, with half the syllabus in each test; besides unit-tests, which were conducted at the end of each unit. Revision was done in school; worksheets were corrected and feedback shared with the children for all these assessments. Modified-question-papers were set for some children up to Class-7. These had more objective type questions such as fill-in-the-blanks, match-the-following and multiple-choice questions. Children were given a diagram, instead of asking them to draw one, and then they were asked to label the parts. Accommodations were given at all levels as mentioned in Section 6.1.

6.2.3 Process of identification / assessment of SEN

A list of children was given to the SpEd team by coordinators, followed by observation in the classroom by special-educators; a formal assessment was suggested if necessary. Standardized tests such as Brigance Diagnostic Inventories, Grade Level Assessment Device (GLAD) were used. Informal assessment material was compiled by the SpEd team to establish academic functioning levels of children. They also said that behaviour issues such as aggression, lack of attention and emotional issues were identified by class-teachers. Most teachers were not aware of a checklist for identification of SEN, though the SpEd team did mention that there was one. One of the questions in the interview was how did teachers identify a SEN? This did not yield any significant answers. Two teachers said they identified the difficulty in the child based on their notebooks and behaviour in the classroom (Priya, Dasu). Uma had mentioned in the questionnaire that she could recognize CWSN, but did not know how to address them. In the interview she explained that she was not trained to handle CWSN and sought considerable help from the special-educator in her first year at MPES. In Class-6 children at-risk for SEN were formally assessed by organisations approved by the CBSE (Section 2.1). Children with severe difficulties were given exemptions and choice of optional subjects from Class-7. The decision to either continue in CBSE with exemptions and accommodations or move to NIOS board that offered more flexibility and is relatively simpler than CBSE was taken in Class-8 for children with mild to moderate difficulties.

The Vice-principal VP2, made an important point with respect to formal assessments and modified-question-papers,

> *Modified-question-papers are only offered to those children who have been formally assessed. Because there are cases where some children without disabilities, don't want to be challenged, and hence want a modified one. But that's not right, challenge is needed for all. So being a big school, to avoid any confusion, we give the modified one to those who have been formally assessed (for a SEN).*

Both mainstream-teachers and SpEd team were involved in identification of SEN. Teachers expressed difficulty in identifying SEN. MPES has some strong processes in place that were followed consistently in areas such as curriculum preparation and delivery, assessments and for identification / assessment of SEN; however, many mainstream-teachers were not aware of the checklist for initial identification of SEN.

6.3 School and classroom practices

In this section I present findings that give us an idea about the working practices of the school.

6.3.1 Curriculum

MPES used the flexibility given by the CBSE till Class-6 such as covering 70% of the prescribed syllabus, assessment patterns and frequency, exemptions and alternate subjects for subjects such as science and second language. Some common findings were teachers planned for the class with the average-performing child in mind; they mentioned lowering of levels to include CWSN as was evident from this typical quote by Nimi, ‘we have to keep these children in mind when we plan for the lesson. We have to deviate from the class, come to a lower level, so that others don’t come to know. We use simpler terms, but explain the concepts’. High-school teachers felt that that there was no point in giving an adapted simpler text to some children, since all had to attempt the same CBSE question paper. Teachers also felt that they were not able to keep the ‘bright, high-average children’ (*sic*) fully engaged. While worksheets were prepared at different levels, not many teachers spoke about their usage in the classroom especially in primary and middle-school; however, some teachers mentioned that they made differential or additional worksheets (Ritu, Lisa, Meena, Reji and Naty). As an exception, Dasu said that she gave the class higher-level worksheets, while she used that time to explain to children who were struggling.

Notes were given importance from Class-1 and comprised mainly of question and answers, definitions and important points. In primary and middle-school, teachers wrote on the board and children copied it down in their books, in high-school it was a combination of writing on the board and dictating notes. Most teachers said notes helped children prepare for assessments. For example, Anna said that a 42-page lesson adapted to 12 pages of notes was less daunting to the child. A few teachers like Shane, expressed a dilemma in giving notes to children. She said ‘sometimes I feel we should not give; but then looking at marks I feel we have to give, at least they will know what needs to be written’. Mona had a different approach and said that children were encouraged to write notes from the text too, and many did it, while she said some did need teacher-made notes.

Some pertinent points raised by teachers include: 1) The sudden increase in content at some grade levels. Teachers (Maddy, Flame) raised a concern that children from nursery section were at different readiness levels, but the Class-1 curriculum involved writing answers to questions, had more subjects including formal grammar; and had reduced focus on basics such as phonics and reading. 2) Anna said the syllabus from Class-8 to 9 was a big jump. Children who would score an average of 60% marks were not able to cope with the increased volumes in Class-9, and their marks dropped. 3) Constraints due to vastness of syllabus were expressed by many teachers. MPES made worksheets at different levels to make the curriculum accessible to all children in high-school. Notes given by teachers were used at all classes, these notes were simpler and more comprehensive than the textbook.

6.3.2 Teaching strategies

Questionnaire data reveals that teachers used different strategies in the classroom (refer Table 6.1).

Strategies Mentioned by Teachers	**Number of teachers in Classes 1-5 (total=61)**	**Number of teachers in Classes 6-10 (total=59)**
Teaching Aids including audio/visual aids	21	5
Group discussion	7	5
Real life examples	9	1
Outdoor activities	3	
Group activities, hands-on activities	25	
Repetition of topic	4	2
Interactive session including role-play, games, quiz	17	7
Peer learning	1	2
Modified-question-papers	2	5
Differential teaching	2	
Preplanning lessons	2	
Use simpler words	2	14
Remedial sessions	5	6
Respect the child, give them responsibilities *	2	
Giving opportunities *	10	9
Positive comments *	3	6
Counselling *	8	2
*Strategies that point towards behaviour management		

Table 6.1: Data from questionnaire on teacher strategies used by teachers of Classes-1 to 10

Questionnaire data indicates that no teacher used the word inclusive teaching, however some teachers were found to be using strategies that pointed towards an inclusive approach (Vignette-6#3). Teachers in primary-school used more teaching aids than middle and high-school; and there were more interactive sessions in primary and middle-school than high-school. Not many teachers used peer learning as a strategy. Responses also indicate that some teachers paid attention to behaviour and socio-emotional skills as an aspect of learning. Vignette-6#2 illustrates a typical day in a Class-5 room as seen during the observation session.

Vignette-6#2 (Observation)

> *The Hindi and English teachers had a warm-up activity, walked around the class, changed the places of some children, and had writing, reading and discussion as part of the 40-min session. The Hindi teacher wrote everything systematically on the board, used yellow chalk for questions, white for answers, syllabicated as she wrote and explained the importance of some vowel positions.*
>
> *In the science period, when the class said they wanted a change from the lesson, the teacher conducted a quiz, and in the end, she asked them to do some writing.*
>
> *The social studies teacher started the class directly while they were still boisterous and had writing as the main activity for the session. She had no specific strategy to involve them in writing notes. She filled the board with notes, children kept asking for clarifications, sometimes they walked in and out of the class without taking permission. Later, the teacher said that there was no point talking to them and that 'I just let them be, and don't expect much from them'. Instructions for homework were given at a fast pace and were not written on the board or repeated.*
>
> *The math teacher did prime factorization in the class, and called upon a child who appeared to be not very confident. She gave him specific instructions, encouraged him and helped him do the problem on the board. She then took a difficult example and solved it on the board. She gave two sets of problems on the board and allotted the simpler set to some children.*
>
> *In lunch-time the teacher had stepped out of class, some children read a note on the teachers' table that two CWSN had to go to the resource-room. One of them said they were 'dumbos' and hence went to the resource-room.*

An account of some strategies as observed in classrooms and shared by teachers in interviews are presented in Vignette-6#3. Some instances of strategies used by teachers in writing notes indicate that they did give instructions that would help children follow a procedure. Most high-school teachers mentioned that they would like to use strategies such as role-plays and debates to make the subject more interesting, but completion of syllabus and examinations were constraints, teacher Ahana's comment summed it up well. While Dhruva mentioned that he did try to use practical examples to enhance learning. Purva raised a unique point on the importance of correct and specific instructions.

Vignette-6#3

> *An emphasis on the process of systematically taking down notes was observed in many classes. Some instructions that were observed: use a red colour pencil for questions and blue for answers; if there are only 2 lines left on a page go to the next page and underlining keywords in answers. Some teachers made it a point to write a couple of lines on the board and walk around the class observing if all were able to take it down. While some teachers filled up the board at a stretch and did not pause in between (observation, Class-2).*
>
> *Teachers had mentioned the usage of mind-maps and flowcharts as a strategy. This observation in Lisa's class, who had mentioned both in her interview and questionnaire that she uses mind-maps was typical of most teachers. Lisa explained a part of the geography lesson, and towards the end of the period, quickly drew a mind-map on the board. The children were given the choice of copying it in their textbooks, but she did not check in their books. Another common strategy that she used, was to underline specific words as the text was being read. From where I was sitting, I observed at least 4 children who were not underlining (observation, Class-5).*
>
> *I struggle to finish the vast portions. I just get into the class, start and go on until the last minute. Time and syllabus are the major constraint, otherwise we could have done better (high-school teacher Ahana, interview).*
>
> *I try and use real-life examples. For example, when I introduced Pythagoras theorem, I talk about Egypt and its pyramids, talk about how they may have measured it, and talk a little about Thales who used an innovative method (high-school teacher Dhruva, interview).*
>
> *In a Class-6 observation session, the science teacher used an interesting strategy. She had drawn a tooth and two unnamed columns on the board. She called out children and named a food item. The child had to classify it as junk or heathy food and draw it in the correct column. Out of 12 or 13 children she called out, 3 said they could not draw and were sent back. 2 said they knew, but had confusion in the columns (because they were not named as junk and healthy) (observation).*
>
> *When we give instructions, we need to be very focused, for example, instead of saying 'don't do this, we can say do this' and, 'when a child writes 7 as 70,*

> *teacher can say write 07 with 0 in tens place and 7 in one's place' (Purva, interview).*

These indicate that individual teachers used different strategies; however, they did not think of it in terms of an inclusive pedagogy.

Teachers in the pull-out rooms and the NIOS-class were observed to use strategies that aimed at engaging children more productively than in the main-classroom. It was also observed that attention was given to most children in the pull-out rooms when a task was allotted. For example, syllabication and context clues were given to help children read; math facts were given to children to help them solve word problems and teachers drew in the child's book to explain a point. Special-educator Veda gave an example on how they worked at the child's functioning level in the ECS-class (Vignette-6#4).

Vignette-6#4

> *When a child is comfortable with only 1-digit addition, I teach word problems, work on speed and accuracy with 1-digit numbers; I then take simple 2-digit numbers such as 10+2, 10+5 and help the child do it with help; bigger numbers such as 10+8 are introduced, but with the assurance that we are only trying. In the modified-question-paper, 70 to 80% of questions were framed for what the child can comfortably do (special-educator Veda).*

This observation from a NIOS-class, that demonstrates positive negotiation was not observed in many of the other main-classrooms (Vignette-6#5):

Vignette-6#5

> *'Sectoral Aspects of Indian Economy' was being covered in the economics period; the teacher said that they would start the class with writing notes, to which there was some resistance. She got into an agreement with the class that they could have a discussion first; and then move on to writing; and IF the entire class completed the planned content, the last 10 minutes would be free. She also instructed that they could work in groups of not larger than 3; some children worked by themselves; while some others quickly rearranged and formed groups (observation, NIOS class).*

In my observation session with special-educator C7 in the resource-room, I noticed that she solved 3 problems in Algebra in 40 minutes with a group of 6 children from Class-8. Later she pointed out during the interview that problems were not solved in such detail in the main-classroom. Some observations that point towards more leniency for children in pull-out classes were observed. Children stepped out of the pull-out class multiple times. In one of the middle-school resource-room sessions, CWSN were working on a puzzle in the math hour. Special-educator Ginny explained that they had two periods of remedial, after doing some Math, they wanted a lighter period, and hence they were working on a simple puzzle. In another instance, in one of the Class-6 sessions the teacher gave 30 words for dictation, while in the ECS-class 10 words. The four 8th graders who were interviewed concurred that a couple of their friends with 'lots of difficulties in studies and behaviour' were always looking out for opportunities to not be part of both classroom and extra-curricular activities. While teachers were able to pay more attention to children in the pull-out rooms, there probably was more lenience towards children.

6.3.3 Behaviour management strategies

Questionnaire data (Table 6.1) reveals that a significant number of teachers (23 out of 61 in primary-school, 17 out of 59 in middle and high-school) gave importance to behaviour and socio-emotional skills as an aspect of learning; an important aspect of inclusive approach. My general observation was that many mainstream-teachers did not use any specific strategy to engage children who were not participating or were disturbing the class. For example, two children with a formal diagnosis of SEN either wandered in the class, or got up and switched off the computer in the class; but none of the teachers had any strategy to include them in class. However, some instances of proactive behaviour management were observed and shared by teachers in the interviews such as Priya and Naty who highlighted the importance of rapport-building, Mary in the SpEd team highlighted the importance of involving children in taking responsibility for their behaviour and coordinator Raja who gave the provision for a child to step out to calm himself . Peer learning was not mentioned by many teachers (6 out of 50 interviewed, and 3 out of 120 in questionnaire).

Vignette-6#6

> *I plan in detail. Children enjoy role-play. I make groups and give them characters, they enjoy that. This is one way to draw out a child and showcase their talent. This motivates other children too. I lay ground rules. I watch them when they don't know I am watching. I sometimes write in their almanac, just so that the parents know. I explain with examples. Many of them have pets and toys. I tell them, how do you feel if your toys and pets are hurt (Sheena).*

> *I observe children and try to establish rapport with them when they are likely to be more relaxed such as lunch-hour (Priya).*
>
> *I make sure I am in the classroom before children came in the morning, which gives me a chance to interact with children when they came in (Naty).*
>
> *CWSN in middle and high-school are counselled and attention drawn to their behaviour and its consequences. While in primary-school, the SpEd team interacts with the child's parents and class-teachers to understand the child better (Mary).*
>
> *'A little appreciation for little work' works wonders; such as, brightly coloured stars and smileys as rewards; and writing positive comments (coordinator Flower).*
>
> *I make groups of 5 children, with one of them a mentor who helps the others in their group in completing tasks. This is a strategy adopted by me, and not a school-wide practice (Hira).*
>
> *I form groups of 7 to 8 children, with 3-4 bright ones in it and give worksheets to them which are made by me. This also keeps the bright kids motivated because it is unfamiliar worksheets for them too (Lisa).*
>
> *I allot some struggling children to bright children; children may hesitate in asking the teacher for clarifications but are more comfortable with their friends (Naty and Nash).*
>
> *The provision to step out was granted to a child who became restless when noise levels in the class were high. He did not avail of the provision; but giving him that choice helped him feel better and avoided anxiety (coordinator Raja).*
>
> *If they had social studies class before mine, and if I were to start Trigonometry, then the first 10 minutes of my class is wasted. Instead, if I engage them in something completely different for the first 5 minutes of the class, it helps them clear their memories and start afresh (coordinator Mala).*
>
> *I think a gradual increase in expectations from CWSN helps. For example, when children do not want to write, it is better to set intermediate goals (such as writing 3 lines) and rewarding the attainment of these (Hira).*

In Vignette-6#6, Sheena's comment illustrates the importance of planning, motivation and teachers' observation. Interestingly, the few teachers who used peer learning looked at CWSN benefitting from their friends without SEN; and not reciprocal peer learning. Mala made a unique observation which focuses on ensuring that the teacher had the attention of the class before she starts the lesson; and the awareness that children needed time to switch between subjects. Raja's comment on the effect of the environment in the classroom for some children emphasises the need to look at difficulties as not just within the child but outside too. Summarizing, MPES had evolved some effective school and classroom practices such as children were pulled-out of the main-classroom only for math and/or English and all children got an opportunity to participate in all activities of the school. Notes were given for lessons from Class-1; while the adaptation helped in simplifying the content, some children who could read the main lesson too may have depended on the notes. Some teachers were aware of worksheets prepared at different levels and used it effectively. Most teachers spoke about lowering the teaching levels to reach out to all children. Many teachers also expressed constraints of time and syllabus in being more creative in lesson delivery. The term 'inclusive pedagogy or approach' was not used by any teacher, though a few instances of this were observed. In the pull-out rooms and NIOS-class, teachers used more teaching aids and strategies and were seen to include most children; however, they were more lenient. While teachers did acknowledge behaviour management as an import aspect, no teacher mentioned any strategy specifically.

6.4 Teacher training

MPES conducted sensitization workshops twice a year, the first one was quite general in nature, while the second one was based on issues they face through the term. Coordinator Rama said that training was also conducted on topics such as leadership besides academic topics. CBSE also conducted workshops for teachers on academic content. In this section we look at views of teachers on training and the need for continued professional development. The responses to workshops attended in MPES in the questionnaire were: identification of CWSN, how to handle behaviour issues, slow learners and ADHD and how to communicate with CWSN. Vignette-6#7 has typical comments that are indicative of teacher's skills, approach to teaching and learning, awareness of inclusion and SEN, and the areas for continued professional development.

Vignette-6#7

> *Some mainstream-teachers are not aware of SEN, some know superficially; and some understand. Even I didn't know till I did the SEN course (special-educator Mihika).*
>
> *To children whose concentration is not good and disturb others, we give different tasks - like finding words in the text and marking, explaining the same*

> *concept again using audio-visual aids, mind-maps, diagrams. I give one-word flowcharts, and ask them to expand it. I draw flowcharts on board and ask them to copy it in their text, this also helps in revision. We give few words on the board after explaining, and ask them to find these in notes, so that means they have to read their notes, which helps in revising (Ritu).*
>
> *I have not been able to reach out to all kids. The bright kids finish their work fast, explain to their friends how they did it. Though that is good, I haven't done anything to challenge them (Purva).*

While special-educator Mihika's view gives us a glimpse into the range in awareness of SEN amongst teachers; Ritu's strategies highlights that some teachers have been using inclusive approaches while not using the technical word. While in the questionnaire, Purva had mentioned identification of special needs as the focus for workshops that were needed, in the interview Purva's quote draws attention to the need to address all children in a class. These quotes vividly bring out the need for continued professional development. Findings reveal the nature of professional development that would be needed at MPES. Some teachers (such as Heena, Mira, Priya, Ritu and Hanna), mentioned that in a class of 40 children, they were not able to give attention to all children, and that they were not trained to handle CWSN. Purva shared that at a school where she had earlier worked, there was intensive training for almost one year where classroom management and lesson-planning were taught; while at MPES there was a short orientation. She also raised the issue of behaviour management, and said that she did not know how to manage issues such as attention-seeking. She said that 'when an issue crops up, we scold him, and then later I feel guilty that I scolded the child'. Heena and Mona and special-educators Flame and Ginny shared that workshops on sensitization towards inclusion and SEN, and inclusive practices in classroom were needed. Prefects of high-school felt that the school has to invest time in bringing about a change in attitudes of teachers towards inclusion. Interestingly, no teacher raised the topic of 'attitude of teachers' as part of their professional development. An interesting finding was teachers shared that peer learning was more beneficial than workshops that were lecture-based. Dhruva said that periodic workshops were conducted by the school on topics such as teaching pedagogy, but interacting with other teachers generated more ideas than the workshops. One member of the SpEd team pointed out that there are individual differences between the approaches of teachers, hence group workshops may not work. She said that interacting with teachers one-on-one and clarifying their thought process has helped in the past. Findings reveal the need for teachers to be oriented towards the theoretical aspect of inclusive pedagogy, SEN and its implications and classroom behaviour management. Strategies that were used by some could be disseminated amongst all teachers.

6.5 Chapter summary

The implementation of inclusion in a school is reflected in the model followed, its structure, practices and processes. MPES follows a multi-level system consisting of main-classrooms and pull-out rooms. In the higher-classes, some children who found the CBSE challenging were in a classroom that followed the NIOS board. MPES had several standard processes in place including curriculum preparation, assessments and identification of SEN. As is to be expected from a large school, some teachers were not aware of these though. Teachers did not specifically say they follow inclusive approaches; but some teachers were observed to use the same.

Chapter 7: Findings - Indicators of Inclusion

In this chapter findings related with the indicators of inclusion namely participation, achievement and social inclusion are presented. An important related finding, description of SEN by teachers of MPES is also presented.

7.1 Description of SEN at MPES

Perceptions of teachers and their understanding of SEN is important in how a school defines and practices inclusion. Teachers' thoughts on SEN also influence their opinion on placement. Evidence that emerged from the questionnaire indicated that 96 (out of 120) teachers said that they were aware of CWSN and addressed their needs. However, in response to the same question 20 teachers said that they were aware but did not know how to address their needs and 2 teachers said they had difficulty in identifying CWSN needs. One teacher indicated that there was no CWSN in her class.

7.1.1 Descriptions of SEN

Data from questionnaires (Table 7.1) and interviews with teachers revealed three main kinds of descriptions. First, that within the questionnaire teachers often used terms such as learning difficulty, ADHD, autism, slow learners and physical impairments. Whilst, in the interviews teachers were not aware of a formal diagnosis, but used these words from their experience; or because they have heard a colleague use that word. For instance, children who were slow were slow learners; and children who had difficulty with academics were said to have a learning difficulty. Second, in both the questionnaire and interviews teachers expressed SEN in terms of behaviour including physical aggression, and socio-emotional issues such as intolerance with peers, lacking confidence and low self-esteem. Finally, teachers described SEN in terms of difficulties faced by children in learning such as a difficulty in acquisition of language (English) that led to difficulties in speaking, reading and writing; and issues with memory and attention. These difficulties were accounted for in questionnaire and interview responses. Both in the interviews and questionnaire teachers used terms such as 'special child, counsellor child, ADHD child, LD child, remedial child, resource-room child, slow learner and slow child'.

Special Needs Observed by Teacher in Classroom	**Classes 1-5**	**Classes 6-10**	**Classes 1-10**
Descriptions using labels, though there may not have been a formal diagnosis or awareness of these terms			
Learning disability	15	7	22
Reading disability	10	5	15
Slow learners	16	14	30
ADHD	6	4	10
Short attention span, distracted, restlessness, hyperactivity, problems with concentration,	22	7	29
Autism	2	1	3
Speech difficulty	5	0	5
Spatial issues	1	0	1
Physical disabilities including vision, muscular dystrophy, hearing	5	4	9
Description according to behaviour and socio-emotional skills			
Behaviour problem	15	6	21
Not confident	1	0	1
Fear of studies	1	0	1
Intolerance with peers	1	1	2
Destructive behaviour and aggression	2	0	2
Children who seek extra or special attention	5	10	15
Description according to difficulties faced in learning			
Children who need help for writing and completing their work	15	5	20
Learning problems in language, overall lack in language skills - listening and speaking, writing	3	1	4
Learning gaps	4	0	4
Slow in understanding concept	1	4	5
Needs help with academics	2	1	3
Phonic problems	2	0	2
Unable to retain and retrieve whatever learnt in class	1	0	1
High IQ kids		1	1
Not really (no SEN observed in class)		1	1

Table 7.1: Data from questionnaire on SEN observed by teachers of Classes-1 to 10

It is interesting to note that 10 teachers identified ADHD as a SEN observed in class whilst 29 teachers described the characteristics of ADHD; and that a greater number of teachers in primary-school than middle and high-school mentioned ADHD or its features. Similarly, there was a greater proportion of primary-school teachers who stated that behaviour problem or issues with writing were the SEN they observed in their classroom.

Vignette-7#1 summarizes the range of SEN observed in the classroom. Purva answered in the questionnaire that she recognized SEN and had listed down several such as ‘attention-seeking, spatial issues, autism, behavioural and physical’, but had challenges in addressing them; also demonstrated her understanding of SEN and its effects in the classroom in the interview. Whilst special-educator Shirly neatly sums it up based on technical terms.

Vignette-7#1

> *They cannot write, read and copy from the board as we write. I don’t know if there are visualization issues or spatial issues. Needs could be behaviour-based or emotions-based… behaviour-based they are very aggressive. They hit others if their needs aren’t met. Emotion-based they are very silent. They don’t come out and become cheerful when we talk to them and are very sensitive. If two kids are writing and one finishes fast, the other is not able to take it. She immediately stops writing it. (She is) unable to accept that the other one has finished. Physical disorders too like visual impairment are there (Purva).*
>
> *SEN is not only physical disabilities, we have children who not emotionally stable, though they look fine externally. Then we have LD, writing difficulty and dyscalculia (special-educator Shirly).*

7.1.2 A dilemma in identification and terminology of SEN

Responses from teachers indicated confusion in the identification of SEN and usage of associated terminology. Data suggests that teachers believe all children who exhibit learning challenges may not have a SEN.

Vignette-7#2

> *‘Slow children’ (sic) progress (in academics) when parents help at home, with no additional support at school; but ‘special children’, need one-on-one remedial help in school and intensive parental support at home (interview, primary-school teacher Maddy).*
>
> *I find it difficult to differentiate between CWSN and below-average children (questionnaire, high-school teacher Shane).*
>
> *Below-average children are slow learners, that is children who learn slower than the others, and are ‘normal children’, who could be included in the main-classroom. But special children it is different. Last year there was this child who I thought cannot study. Later I realized that he can study, but has other*

> *difficulties of focusing and attention because he is a special child. There is one below-average child who understands, but doesn't put it on paper, he is very lazy (interview, high-school teacher Shane).*
>
> *I just thought special children are children who were 'low-average' or 'children who were aloof' till I was introduced to the concept of SEN and inclusion at MPES (interview, primary-school teacher Uma).*
>
> *I became aware of SEN only when I got a list of CWSN from the coordinator. After that, I observed that their behaviour (of children whose name was in that list) was indeed different. They disturbed the class, roamed about the class, made weird sounds and complained unnecessarily (interview, high-school teacher Gina).*

Behaviour was a prominent word used by teachers in describing SEN. This view by Ahana was typical of many teachers:

Vignette-7#3

> *Two children are counsellor children, and have learning difficulties, or difficulties in learning. One of them interacts with peers, but is not much of a problem. The other girl, does not really talk to anyone, but listens to instructions. But this other boy, he is not a counsellor or special child, he can study, but behaviour is a challenge. He is a sweet fellow but very irritating. Sometimes, when you are trying to finish a lesson, you feel that if he is not there, you can finish it. He is very observant too. He doesn't listen to instructions (Ahana).*

This opinion that children who pose behavioural challenges and not learning challenges were not CWSN was expressed by some teachers. Tiara had a unique response in the interview that there may be children who were not identified as having a SEN; but might need additional support. As an example, she said that sometimes during adolescence the academic performance of some children drops suddenly and they stop interacting with their peers. She spoke about a child who she thought could perform much better but lack of confidence was the deterrent. In the questionnaire, one of the SEN identified by Tiara was 'behaviour issues'. All responses listed in the preceding paragraphs point towards the medical model. There were some singular responses from teachers that indicate the social model and capabilities approach as in the vignette below.

Vignette-7#4

> *Special needs is not a disability. It is a learning difficulty. Few children take time in grasping concepts. All children do not work at the same pace. Some are a*

> *little slow. If you see them outside class, they will look like normal children, since we are teaching them, we know (Lisa).*
>
> *Everybody is alike in the classroom. Everybody is not different. The word differently-abled is there, but we don't say that. In one way or the other they have some skills and we are here to develop them and motivate them* (*Rama).*
>
> *Special education is a person's heart, mind and soul. When the child is there, just doing and teaching is not special education. You need to accept the child, only then you can teach the child (coordinator Pat).*

7.1.3 Description of SEN by the SpEd team

Special-educators and counsellors too described SEN on the lines of mainstream-teachers in terms of academics and socio-emotional issues. For example, special-educator Mihika who works with children of Classes-1 and 2 said that restlessness was a main feature in CWSN, and that, 'they go around, they cannot sit in one place. Some cannot stop talking, even when class is going on, he cannot wait'. She elaborated on difficulties seen in academics such as learning gaps across skill areas including not being able to read at grade level. However, observations such as difficulties in organization including not being able to open the right page when told, not being ready with stationery needed for the class, difficulty in following instructions such as leaving a line after writing the question, or following the rules of punctuation was not something that many mainstream-teachers mentioned. Special-educator, Flame, who works with children of Classes-1 and 2 and had done a short-term course on SEN, said that she could identify SEN. She said 'he (a CWSN) is different from other children, maybe if I give instructions, other children will follow, this child may be lost here and there. Some are slow, we have to push them a lot'. It was noted that special-educators and counsellors with formal training (such as a post graduate in counselling) used technical terms such as LD, autism, ADHD, MD, CP, low IQ, visual, hearing and speech impairment and loco-motor issues. And finally, CWOSN typically described CWSN as children who came for counselling and to the resource-room to be weak in studies, had problems, were not good in expression or were not able to manage their studies. To summarize, it was evident that teachers and special-educators have had experience with diverse SEN. In the questionnaire teachers used terms such as LD, ADHD and ASD; but in interviews many described the characteristics of SEN instead of using labels. Teachers described SEN in the way they manifest as difficulties in academics and behaviour. A few teachers also described the difficulty in differentiating children who were low-average from CWSN.

7.2 Indicators of inclusion - participation, achievement and social inclusion

Interviewees provided rich information when asked about their personal understanding of inclusion. According to teachers Diya and Flower and high-school prefects, inclusion represented a state of equality between the children, emphasised on equal opportunities and in encouraging a sense of belonging among all children.

> *Everyone should get equal opportunities. Just because someone has a special or different thing, they don't need to have a special school for themselves… they can be part of us, have the same opportunities and explore. When CWSN knew that there was someone who they could trust and got the right kind of encouragement, they participated very well (high-school prefects).*
>
> *It is good to have CWSN in the classroom, in a different classroom you are giving them the notion that you are different from the others… and that is the motto also of the school.. not to segregate, but include. They are one among all, they are equal, they are not different (counsellor, Diya).*
>
> *All children have rights of education and we give them a common platform. They learn together, understanding each other, academically and socially. All 40 (children) are 40 different individuals. Making them feel they all belong to the same class, making them feel that you all have to learn something in common is what we do in the classroom (coordinator, Flower).*

Whilst the principal aligned the term inclusion with belonging and wellbeing.

> *To me achievement means happiness when there are kids who want to come to school every day, no matter what, (that) is success for me. If you ask me how many of your kids went to IIT (a premier institute in India for higher studies), I will say zero. But if you ask me how many of them are confident young people? I will say all. Happy kids will be doing things. Mentally they are in a place to resolve conflicts. they will be able to find solutions, and they are at peace within.. and they will try and make something out of their lives (principal).*

One of the middle-school prefects said this,

> *I like coming to school. Boredom is not nice to me, I like learning more things. Here in my school, I get to sit with your friends and learn. You get joy when you are learning. In our school there is no chance to get bored, there is always something to do.*

Thus, reflecting a sense of achievement due to learning, being socially included and a sense of participation amongst CWOSN too. Almost as an outsider Purva's narratives highlight the conflicts that emerge personally with the concept of inclusion. Her instinct was to term inclusion with problematic pupil encounters; and was sensitive to the fact that CW&WOSN were responsible for the inappropriate behaviour of a child.

> *Children can be in classroom for some time, but they need to go to resource-room for some time for their own benefit. For aggressive kids the atmosphere in classroom is intolerable. There is one kid in my class who keeps hitting people, and the classroom environment changes. But the parents' argument is if he is not there does the classroom environment change? I too have that question - can one child change the environment of whole classroom? does it also mean that other children are contributing in their own way? (Purva).*

These unique comments raise important issues such as providing opportunities to participate, academic and social inclusion, education as a right, importance of inculcating the spirit of learning together and sense of belonging, segregation and equality of all learners. The principal equated achievement with happiness, and happy children as children who possess important life skills. Teachers also raised the concern of children with behaviour issues being included in the main-classroom, and that a smaller environment may be beneficial to them (Vignette-6#1, Section 6.1.1). While these were individual comments made by children and teachers, they were indicative of the approach towards inclusion at MPES.

7.2.1 Views on participation

The open-ended question in the questionnaire on strategies used by teachers in the classroom gave inputs on these aspects of inclusion. The interview data gave more detailed inputs. Some data was gathered during observation as well. A few responses from teachers in the questionnaire were:

> *ask them (CWSN) to participate in group discussion and share their thoughts with each other; give opportunities in all activities like assembly, role-play, taking on the role of monitor; call children one-by-one to the black board and get them to write the answer so children take interest in learning; hands-on activity so that class can be more interactive; encourage them to take responsibility in class; give opportunities to be part of discussion; field trip, drama and games to ensure all students can participate and learn.*

These responses indicated that while teachers did not categorically say they strategized to enhance participation of all students, the children did get opportunities to participate. A few teachers said that they 'give opportunities for students to participate in all activities'. Some observations in the classrooms (Vignette-7#5) raise the aspect of what counts as and contributes to participation and being socially included:

Vignette-7#5 (Observation)

> *A couple of children (Classes-1 and 2) walked around the class when the others were writing, the teacher said that if she were to stop that 'special child', then he would get agitated and would disturb the class, and that at least now he was part of the class.*
>
> *In a Class-2 period a child sitting in the last bench was reading a storybook, and did not participate in the discussion. Towards the end of the class when writing work was given, he quickly copied down everything quickly and accurately.*
>
> *In a Class-6 room that had three CWSN it was observed that no teacher had a specific strategy to involve them in the class activities. They participated sporadically, sometimes they walked out of the class without taking permission and got back too. No questions were asked. Later during an informal conversation with the teacher, she said that there was no point talking to them and they 'just let them be, and don't expect much from them'.*
>
> *Some other ways in which teachers felt they were including CWSN were: distributing book; keeping a child who wouldn't write engaged by asking him erase the board or walk around the class (interview).*

In the above examples, children were part of the class physically, but did not appear to be involved in the activities of the class. This raises the question of does this count as participation and being socially included in the class; and from the child's point of view a sense of belonging to the class. The MoI at MPES meant that all children were together in all non-academic activities. There was a mixed response from children to this MoI; some children said that they liked the common periods, however some children said they felt left out (Vignette-7#6).

Vignette-7#6

> *I like to play with my friends, I don't have a group. They (CWOSN) have groups, and I join a group which I he feel like (joining) on that particular day (Student-1, primary-school, interview).*
>
> *We like all parts of the day such as lunchbreak, going to the tuckshop, play-time, classroom and resource-room. We do not like the sports period because it is too crowded and we cannot play. No one chooses me to be on their team for any sport (3CWSN, Class-3, interview).*
>
> *Extra-curricular period such as sports are interesting parts of the day because we get to mix and play with everybody else (2 CWSN from Class-8, interview).*

> *In several sessions of observation (Classes-1, 2, 6) it was observed that all children went for sports and music class. In Classes-1 and 2 sports period, all children took part for the first few minutes in the group activity, later when the children were given the freedom to choose, some children who the teacher had said had difficulties looked lost and were not part of any group. In the Class-6 sports period all children played together for some time, and then split into groups; CWSN too were part of the groups, no teacher was involved (observation in extra-curricular classes).*

In the pull-out classes, there were more interactions between teachers and most students thus ensuring that children understood and got a chance to participate (Vignette-7#7). This was shared by teachers and children and observed as well (Vignette-6#4 and 6#5, Section 6.3.2). Findings suggest that since CWSN saw a benefit in being pulled-out of the main-classroom, it offset any feelings of not being included. This also led to a feeling of achievement as expressed in Vignette-7#7; however, a lowering of expectations by teachers was also observed.

Vignette-7#7

> *In the classroom we find it difficult to keep pace with what the teacher writes on the board, but we can keep pace in the resource-room. The resource-room sessions in English and Math helps me learn better than in the (main) classroom (CWSN, Class-8).*
>
> *Children are quite used to the fact that some of them attended pull-out remedial sessions, hence social inclusion or participation in the class is not an issue (special-educator Flame).*

7.2.2 Views on achievement and inclusion

Findings reveal several interpretations of the term achievement, and the interaction between inclusion and achievement of all children. Most coordinators and teachers said that achievement as measured by marks and grades was important; but that management was not just result-oriented, and understood that all children cannot score high marks. For example, coordinator Rama, said that they have had children who came into high-school with a low-average score and graduated from Class-10 with a score of around 65%, which was counted as achievement too. Vice-principal VP2, said that though there were expectations from the management as far as academic achievement was concerned, they were also aware that since the school was inclusive in its approach, the expectations from some children could ‘only be this much’. She added ‘the mantra here is not all children score in nineties’. The ability to copy notes from the board and complete the allotted homework was one of the ways teachers measured achievement. For example, Tina said that she saw progress in their notebooks from June to January (the academic year is June to March). Many teachers agreed that inclusion affects achievement. Uma, was categorical that inclusion affected achievement adversely, but she would answer if questioned (by the management) about it. Lisa, who taught social studies, a subject where CWSN were not pulled-out for remedials, explained that she had to ask CWSN many questions to ensure that they understood, which did slow the class down. This implied that while she made sure she gave opportunities for CWSN to participate, it affected the progress of the class. A few teachers were of the opinion that children learn better in a segregated class, as exemplified in Priya's comment, 'they can learn better and more, when they are in a different class because I can go down to their level'. Thus, connecting achievement of CWSN to their lower learning levels and in turn, lowering the teacher's expectations. On a different note, Naty said that, 'if I have a 'bright class with no CWSN', from 50% marks I could pull them up to 70%. But, I prefer an inclusive class where I have to 'pull-up the down-children' who score 2 or 3% to 25 or 30% and that this gives me more satisfaction'. This was an opinion shared by another teacher Reji, who said, with a select group of children, achievement would be better; but that with the current inclusive classroom, the 'below-average children' are also doing well. She said that some children were good with hands-on activities such as making models, some at oral answers and some wrote well. She felt that the assessments should take these into consideration. Since, assessments were mainly written work, it did not give a real picture of achievement. She categorically said that if there were different types of assessment; then some would do well orally while some may make good models and these helped understanding the achievement of the child. On a refreshing note, the principal equated achievement to happiness. She emphasized that school was a place for academics and learning; and that when teachers and students are happy, learning happens. She said that since the school offered multiple choices such as accommodations in subjects and choice of board, they have a 100% result, which meant every child passes the examinations.

7.2.3 Achievement and social inclusion

Interestingly, high-school teacher Heena, connected achievement to social inclusion. She said that CWSN who were not academically lower than the class average had friends in class, but CWSN who were 'low-average' got teased by the rest and did not mingle with others. A common comment by high-school teachers was that they had differential expectations from all children including ‘normal ones’. According to high-school teacher Tiara, if teachers were not flexible in their expectations, students would get anxious which in turn affected their achievement. Children too said that getting better marks helped in getting included in a group. Student-1 said, ‘all children will make fun of us if we don’t get good marks, they will not be our friends’. Special-educator Shirly said that children with difficulties show an improvement in academics when their socio-emotional skills improved.

> *Children are made emotionally strong in the resource-room. The basic formula is – love and like the children, once you develop trust with them, they will follow you. In the last two or three years, a child has improved on communication and social skills so much. Now we see a difference in his knowledge and understanding too; he at least writes in words and phrases – and marks have to be given for that. For example, what happens when you drink contaminated water? – he has written fever. And marks have to be given for understanding (special-educator Shirly).*

She said that, at that point it was important to recognize their achievement and not just focus on the expected answer. A unique response from coordinator Flower (Section 7.2), highlights several aspects of inclusion including academic and social learning; and sense of belonging. The principal said that the most important aspect of schooling was social interaction, and made a pertinent observation that social interactions started in the bus ride to school and continued into the classroom and playground. Anna, stressed on the importance of socio-communication skills and said that academics would happen at its pace but getting all children of her class to communicate was a big goal for her. Maddy, felt that the teachers and ‘normal children’ had an important role to play in social inclusion. On a similar note, coordinator Mala, said ‘inclusion is for both sides (CW&WOSN)’. The high-school prefects too said that ‘mingling socially’ depended on CW&WOSN. Another teacher felt that the social inclusion of a child depended on the child her/himself and the kind of difficulties s/he had. When the difficulty was on the behavioural side and interfered with the working of the classroom, then they were not included by the others. In a Class-5 room, it was observed that a CWSN who was quiet and did not participate in the class was left to himself by the others, but another CWSN who was talkative was treated like the class joker. Thus, findings reveal the role that several people played in the social inclusion of children.

An interesting observation by counsellors Sam and Rani was that social inclusion and exclusion not only happened with CWSN, but with others too. For example, when a child has his head tonsured (due to a family ritual), or when a child put on weight suddenly, they get teased by their friends and might feel excluded. The counsellors felt it was very important that CWSN are made to realize that all children were teased, and not only them. In a similar finding, one CWOSN who was among the high-average functioning children in his class felt that he was not included in sports; and that his friend who went to the resource-room was an important member of all sports classes. Counsellor Rani said that social inclusion depended on awareness; and that in MPES, it was not only CWSN, but children active in sports or art were also are pulled-out of classes. Hence this helped in inclusion. She said that CWSN do get teased more than the other children, and said that peer sensitization for all and assertiveness training for CWSN were important. She also added that giving them responsibilities such as leadership positions of bus monitor and uniform monitor helped. High-school special-educator, Ginny, had an important comment – she felt that children who had been seeking help or were identified in younger grades felt well-included; but the ones who were identified later or who joined MPES around Class-7, did have issues in being included. Special-educator, Hope said – ‘they are able to mingle, there is a feeling of he-is-like-that-only, and the child is accepted by the others for what he is’.

7.3 Chapter summary

To summarize, teachers shared several views on inclusion such as equal opportunities for all children, the right to learn together and that having all children in the same class increases the sense of belonging. Some teachers also said that participation, achievement and social inclusion would be better when children are pulled-out for some parts of the day. Not all teachers strategized to increase participation; however, some activities used in the classrooms did increase chances of participation for all. Children’s responses to participation varied, some were happy to be part of the class while others were not. All three parameters were higher in the pull-out rooms, but was also accompanied by a lowering in expectations from CWSN. While all agreed that academic achievement was important, some teachers were sensitive that achievement was also relative. Some teachers mentioned the other ways that achievement can be measured besides test scores. Many teachers shared that inclusion affects achievement and that having CWSN in the class did bring down the average score of the class. Achievement was connected to inclusion, CWSN who scored better were more likely to be included in the class groups by their peers. Some teachers also highlighted that improvement in socio-emotional skills led to improved learning and hence more achievement.

Chapter 8: Findings - Culture at MPES

In this chapter I discuss findings related to the culture at MPES including aspects such as inclusive values and building a community. Findings with respect to collaboration among different stakeholders, sharing responsibilities amongst them and attitudes of teachers which are important aspects of the culture of a school are also presented.

8.1 Culture of the school

8.1.1 Building a community and establishing inclusive values

The principal of the school strongly believed in inclusion, in the belief of a school for all children and that diversity brings about the best in all. She said,

Vignette-8#1

> *Inclusion is having everybody in; whether it is gender, religion, caste, economic status, or ability and disability. I really feel that you don't see exclusion in the larger society, people live with one another. When you start excluding you develop ghettos, and with ghettos come fear, marginalization, hatred and a lot of negative qualities. Diversity is very robust and is very strong, makes ones capable of facing any perturbance that comes along. So, I have always believed that you should have a school that will have everybody (principal).*

Extending this idea vice-principal, VP1 said that inclusion need not mean lowering of learning levels and believed that all children could achieve. While she stressed on the importance of respecting all learners and strengthening the skill of teachers, she also mentioned the concept of 'normalcy'. According to her,

Vignette-8#2

> *We had few children with difficulties and we were trying to bring them to the normal way of learning, not going down to their level and not knowing the true reason behind that. We were handling it by giving less portions, giving extra time; without knowing that these facilities help children in enjoying their schooling and (children) will also have their share of achievements. In 2010 when we came to know, we underwent teacher training in small groups and adopted it whole-heartedly. We started recruiting more counsellors and communicated with the outside world that we are working with CWSN. Then our principal got trained in inclusion and that has really helped us (vice-principal VP1).*

Vice-principal, VP2 highlighted the importance of awareness, and contributions from the CWSN themselves in building a community, and said,

Vignette-8#3

> *It is important to keep talking about inclusion in different forums such as street plays, annual school day, and with parents and community. We have had CWSN as head boys, and one of their suggestions was to have a committee who will look after the differently-abled kids, and the head of that would be a CWSN. This made me aware that me sitting here and making a policy for someone I don't even know doesn't make any sense. I may be very sensitive and very empathetic, but it's still not the same (vice-principal VP2.)*

Coordinators, vice-principals, principal and several teachers mentioned that the systems of the school have been dynamically changing over the last 10 years to evolve into its current model. The approach of the senior management (vice-principals and principal) indicated a culture that encouraged involvement of all learners, respecting all stakeholders and the importance of awareness, inclusion and training.

As mentioned by VP2 in the previous quote, views of children are very important in building an inclusive culture. Coordinators Mary and Flower, counsellor Rani and the principal too stated the importance of involving children actively and making them aware of their role and accountability in being included by their peers (Vignette-8#4). High-school prefects said that they went to the younger classes once a term and spoke to their younger peers to find out if there were any concerns.

Vignette-8#4

> *There was a child in Class-5 who was notorious for troubling teachers and his peers. When I spoke to the child, he said he does it because his friends like it and it makes them happy. I said get your friends to write about you. He was shocked at what his friends wrote – that he teases, he shouts and is very loud. That was the turning point for the child. We saw a change after that and now he is very much settled (coordinator Mary.)*
>
> *There was a child in Class-5 who was refusing to write. One day recently he wrote, it was very untidy, no conformance to lines, formation was bad. BUT there was effort. We as a class clapped for him. The children wondered that this boy has written so little and Ma'am is praising him. From then on started to write, and we worked on small goals. So, praise has to be there, let them take their time, force will not work (coordinator Flower).*

> *In a Class-9 life skills session I asked the class to write on 'what would they do if they have a disability?'. I then went through the responses, picked up some of them and got children to introspect (counsellor Rani).*

These quotes suggested the intent to involve children as active participants in the process of school improvement, and indicated a culture that all stakeholders in the school system are important. A few teachers mentioned that building rapport with children and being aware of strengths and needs of children was an important aspect of the teaching-learning process (Vignette6#6, Section 6.3.3). Dhruva, said that it was essential that they encouraged children to ask 'silly doubts'. He said that 'snubbing' children for asking basic doubts would make them nonparticipative. Naty, who taught Science and Math indicated that they were some children who were not good in those subjects, but were good in English. She pointed out that it was essential to recognize that, and allot suitable tasks such as writing the newsletter, that utilizes their strengths. She also said that she made sure that they took help from their friends for Math and Science, since it helped in building a positive atmosphere. This example demonstrates the importance given by the teacher to all learners; and the sensitivity of the teacher in ensuring that children were not labelled by their peers. Taken together it points towards a school culture that is supportive where all children were valued.

A few practices of the school (Vignette-8#5) indicate that while MPES had a framework and processes in place, teachers also had the flexibility to do something different.

Vignette-8#5

> *The special-education rooms such as the ECS-classroom, resource-room and counselling room were not tucked away in a corner, but were centrally located in the buildings; that helped them in being considered as an integral part of the school, and in increasing the accessibility and visibility of these services (observation).*
>
> *Generally, CWSN from Classes-1 to 5 drop in with their other peers to show them the resource-room and introduce them to the special education team (special-educator Shirly, interview).*
>
> *Besides their allotted time children also walked into the resource-room and the counsellors' room when they wanted to talk to the special-educators or counsellors, both for discussing academic and socio-emotional issues (observation).*

> *I think that giving teachers a lesson plan to implement limit our creativity. Here (in MPES), we are given a broad lesson plan that suggests the lessons to be covered in a term; this gives us the flexibility to plan and be creative (Purva, interview).*
>
> *Zero-period (an unallotted period which teachers utilize according to their need on activities such as fun activities, catching up on a subject and free play) gives me time and space to walk around and interact with shy and hesitant children (Heena, interview).*
>
> *Till Class-6, the class-teachers stays in the class with children during lunch-time, thus giving them the opportunity to observe the children, and gave children the opportunity to talk to teachers, when they were likely to be more relaxed (observation).*

Practices such as zero-period, class-teachers being in class during lunch, flexibility given to teachers for incorporating their own ideas in the lesson plan helps in building a community of proactive teachers who are more likely to create a culture where all learners are valued. The senior management and most coordinators at MPES were aligned towards a culture that promoted inclusive values where all learners were valued and respected. A few teachers made conscious attempts to involve children in building a community and be responsible for their behaviour. Some practices at MPES helped in enabling teachers to reach out to children and build a positive learning atmosphere.

8.2 Collaboration and shared responsibility

8.2.1 Collaboration between teachers and the SpEd team and shared responsibility

One of the open-ended questions in the questionnaire was on the role of special-educators in MPES (Table 8.1). Interestingly 26 of 120 teachers had not responded to this question. The various roles that teachers mentioned were: 36 of 120 teachers said guidance, counselling and support (children and teachers), 10 of 61 teachers in primary-school, and none in middle and high-school said that special-educators have to spend time with CWSN. This difference in numbers may be attributed to the MoI at MPES and behaviour patterns of children as they grow up. Interestingly, more teachers from primary-school (than middle and high-school) reported behaviour as a challenge.

Role of special-educator	**Number of teachers Classes-1 to 5 (total=61)**	**Number of teachers Classes-6 to 10 (total=59)**	**My remarks**
Guidance, counsel, support	13	23	Some had specifically written guidance for child; or for child and teacher
Remedial-classes ECS-classes, one-to-one teaching	22	6	Reliance on these classes is significantly less as children move from primary to high-school
Identifying problem areas	2	3	
Important role	4	1	
Adapt lessons, make lessons easy, teach in a simple manner	9	4	Indicates a continuing need for training teachers in inclusive approaches In high-school since all children attempt a board exam, the role and perception of special-educators changes
Coordinate with teachers and parents Help in academics	12	4	
Trained and experienced	4		No teacher in middle and high-school had this response
To be with children with behaviour issues, slow learners, children who have difficulties	10		
No response in the questionnaire	13	13	

Table 8.1: Data from questionnaire on the role of special-educators from teachers Classes-1to 10

In interviews and observations, more data on the perceived role of special-educators by mainstream-teachers, and the interactions between the two teams of teachers (mainstream and SpEd) were gathered. In primary and middle-school, special-educators took the remedial sessions in the resource-room. The ECS-room was a combination of both special-educators and mainstream-teachers. However, in high-school, all remedial teaching was done by the mainstream-teachers. The SpEd team was involved in counselling and life skills training. This difference in responsibilities of mainstream-teachers and the SpEd team in different sections probably has a bearing in the manner that roles of special-educators have been described - teachers in lower classes have mentioned that the role of the special-educators involves adapting lessons, taking ECS and remedial classes and help in academics; while teachers in high-school do not mention much about the involvement of special-educators in academics.

An important finding was teachers mentioned that the SpEd team had more knowledge and skills to interact with CWSN. Mona explained that the vice-principals encouraged collaboration amongst different teachers and emphasised on the aspect of the specific knowledge that every professional has. Mona said ‘there is a girl who is good in all subjects but failed in math. I am her class-teacher and I spoke to her, but it did not work. I sent her to the counselling department. She is better now; I cannot do the talking that they can do’. Whilst, coordinator Flower shared that, ‘our special-educators are trained. We only have peripheral knowledge. They have a different view of the child and their approach is different. We consult them quite frequently’. Hira and Uma indicated that when they started teaching in MPES, they were very new to the idea of inclusion, and that they got extensive support from the SpEd team, almost on a daily basis. In interviews, approximately 10 special-educators and teachers were asked on the nature of interactions between mainstream-teachers and the SpEd team; all said that planned interactions were once a month; but informal interactions were more frequent. This was observed in my visits to MPES too, teachers often stopped by the resource-room or the counsellor’s room to consult members of the SpEd team on an issue that they were facing in their class. For example, special-educator Liva said when teachers shared their difficulties in ensuring all children were included strategies such as seating of the child, asking questions that the CWSN most probably knew answers for, giving cues and praising small achievements were shared with them. She said that they specifically made the teacher aware that the child felt good when s/he was appreciated by the mainstream-teacher. She said some teachers felt they were doing all these, but the challenge lay in convincing them to sustain those strategies. Interestingly, special-educator Hope stated that some teachers thought that the role of the SpEd team was to ‘generally counsel all children, even when the CWSN is in the main-classroom’. A couple of instances of this remark were noted in my observation sessions at the resource-room in primary and middle-school. A CWSN (Class-2) was sent to the resource-room in a timeslot in which he was supposed to be in the main-classroom, without a note from the teacher. He said that he was sent out of class by the class-teacher to talk to the counsellor. A Class-5 teacher came with a group of 8 to 9 CWOSN, and requested the counsellor in the resource-room to 'talk to and advice these children on how to behave in the classroom'. This could be perceived to be due to an over-reliance on the SpEd team or lack of awareness of the roles of the two teams. For example, counsellor Sam said that teachers who were particular about children scoring high marks referred children to the SpEd team, and that sometimes it was a temporary setback such as a bereavement in the family and not a difficulty in learning. Counsellor Sam said that when there was a drop in the assessment grades of some CWOSN, some teachers panicked and send the child to the SpEd team. She said, 'as trained people we are aware that sometimes there are setbacks, we talk to the teacher and child and make them aware of it'. In any case there is collaborative working taking place where responsibilities are shared.

There were a few interviews responses from participants that indicate sharing of responsibilities and the easy accessibility between the two teams. Counsellor Ruhi said that when CWSN complained to her about their class-teacher not being able to understand them, she spoke to the teacher. Coordinator Flower highlighted that some children preferred coming to her directly, and she sought guidance from the SpEd team. Whilst, coordinator Rama said she kept the counsellors informed about the 'critical' issues handled in class such as exam anxiety, peer pressure, instances of teasing so that the counsellors could address that matter too. Some teachers were noted to make a significant effort in ensuring communication between the two teams. Special-educator Shirly said when they integrate a CWSN into the main-classroom mid-way through the academic year, she kept in constant touch with the class-teacher to ensure a smooth transition. Special-educator Hope shared that the teachers of Classes-1 and 2 generally sent completed notes of other children as a reference for the ECS-class and resource-room. Some special-educators got CWSN to read parts of the lesson in the pull-out rooms; this feedback was shared with the mainstream-teachers who made them read the same sentences in class. Coordinator Ria summed it up succinctly and said,

> *We have educated our class-teachers. If they find that some child needs special attention they will try to deal from their end. If not, then they come to me. I talk to children, if I am not able to help; we involve counsellors and we work together. If child needs behavioural help, then counsellor fixes a time table; if it is an academic issue, then we resolve it; we also take parents help.*

In contrast there were some interview responses that suggested inadequate collaboration between the two teams. Mira narrated that there was a child who was not interested in academics or sports, did not copy notes or listen to the teacher. She said when she spoke to the counsellors, they called for a Parent-Teacher-Meeting (PTM). However, the parents did not show up, and the counsellors too did not give her any feedback or take any further action. Also, special-educator Ginny and teacher Uma felt that there should be more interactions between the two teams; and that special-educators and counsellors should get into the main-classroom more often. Maddy had mentioned in the questionnaire that she had no idea of how the SpEd department works and, in the interview, she further clarified that she did not know how they taught. In agreement with Maddy, counsellor Sam said,

> *There are some teachers who do not understand or appreciate the work I do. But we are colleagues, we are professionals. Our common objective is the child. On my behalf I give a smile, I follow the same strategy that I do with a child who is resistant. Without stating explicitly, I start working.*

Findings revealed the active collaboration between the two teams in identifying CWSN during admission and in ensuring continuity of services. Coordinators, Haiku and Nima said that at the end of the academic year a report on CWSN was given to the coordinator of the next class to ensure continuity of SpEd services. They also added that though they received a list from the coordinator of the previous class, they also made their own independent observations of the children. The SpEd team indicated that a checklist was available for identification of SEN, but most teachers mentioned they were not aware of it. Coordinator Nisha shared that once a child was referred to the SpEd team, the counsellors identified the type of difficulty – learning, behavioural or physical; based on which the decision was taken on placement of the child – ECS-class, resource-room and/or therapy outside school. Children with severe difficulties were also referred for therapy classes outside school, and they were permitted to leave school early. The SpEd team was involved in the admission process as shared by counsellor Rani. When parents came to school with their children for admission with a report indicative of a SEN the SpEd team was definitely involved. They also said that in cases where there was no report or the parents were not aware of their child's SEN, or when the admission team felt that the child was at-risk to SEN, the SpEd team was involved.

The SpEd team had the responsibility of conducting life skill classes; and individual and group-counselling sessions. Life skill classes in the classroom focused on the 10 core areas prescribed by the UN. They also took up age-appropriate themes such as anger management, career guidance, sexual abuse and peer sensitization. Videos, role-play and puppets were used for these sessions. During classroom sessions, if they felt some children needed more intense inputs, they were taken for group counselling. For instance, counsellor Ruhi said in the interview ‘we did a session on peer sensitizations. After that some special children (*sic)* told us that they were being teased by certain children. Then we called these children as a group with others who are seen as leaders and had a small-group session.’ According to teachers, coordinators and the SpEd team, CW&WOSN were involved in group counselling. After the group counselling session, the class-teachers were updated and classroom modifications were given. Counsellor Diya said, ‘mostly topics for counselling are given by coordinators; that helps us because they are in direct contact with the class and teachers.’ Coordinator Nimi said that the life skills classes conducted by counsellors helped children understand one another and settle down. Coordinator Raja said that she refers children in her class who regularly tease other children to the counselling team.

Summarizing, mainstream-teachers expressed that special-educators had more knowledge to counsel and teach CWSN and a few consulted them. While there were planned interactions between the two teams, they also interacted informally when they had to discuss about a specific child or situation thus indicating a sharing of responsibility. There was active collaboration between the two teams in identifying CWSN during admission and in ensuring continuity of services. However, not much collaboration between the two teams to involve the special-educators in the main-classroom or to involve the mainstream-teacher in the pull-out rooms were observed.

8.2.2 Collaboration among mainstream-teachers

Teachers prepared notes for lessons and shared it with their colleagues. Different teachers of a class collaborated among themselves and made sure that homework given was not too much for children to handle as was evident from Mona’s narrative. Interaction between teachers on aspects such as participation and behaviour of children was limited as observed and as mentioned by teachers. For example, in the Class-3 music period it was observed that children did not follow instructions after repeated requests. The music teacher said that she would take a video of them and send it to the class-teacher. Another child had carried his math notebook to the music period instead of the music notebook even after multiple reminders. When I had an informal conversation with the music-teacher after the class, she shared that generally there was not much interaction with the class-teachers; neither did she share her observations (such as the child who carried the wrong notebook to the music class) with the teachers.

8.2.3 Collaboration among school and parents

PTMs were conducted twice a year, during which the progress of the child was briefly discussed and behaviour issues were mentioned. The class-teacher met the parents of CWSN first in the PTM, and then they were sent to meet the SpEd team. Coordinators Reddy and Ramya said that they did not get enough support from parents. Counsellor Diya shared that help is sought from parents when there were severe behavioural issues. Teachers mentioned that they could inform the coordinator and speak to the parents if anything important had to be conveyed, or help was needed for something specific such as completion of notes or inappropriate behaviour of their child. Mona said, 'what I like about this place is, difficult issues and incidents that can be subdued are raised and sorted out well by coordinators and counsellors. They call parents. I have seen so many issues emerge, evolve and get sorted out'. On the other hand, Shane spoke about a child who needed a lot of support, and that working with parents and counsellors brought about an improvement. Counsellors kept in touch with children's external therapists, especially in the younger classes. Finally, the principal said that collaboration among all stakeholders – parents, policy-makers, doctors and therapist, teacher – was something that would really work, and that she had not been able to achieve.

8.3 Teacher attitudes

Teacher's attitudes are an important aspect of the culture of a school. Purva highlights the importance of encouraging all children and said,

> *In the class we encourage this child with difficulties and clap for him. But I also see to it that he is not the only one clapped for. I make sure all children are recognised. In some cases, children instigate these children (she meant CWSN) and put all the blame on them. I make it a point to bring that up in our discussions with the class.*

The school ethos (that MPES was a place for all learners), the presence of CWSN in classrooms, and that teachers were expected to be able to cater to the needs of all students were opinions expressed by many teachers.

Vignette-8#6

> *When you have a CWSN in class we have to work with the child, he is part of us. I am a better teacher because of the diversity in my class (Heena).*
>
> *They (CWSN) are there from the beginning. It's like family, they are there always, so you accept them and teach them. I teach Class-9 and 10; syllabus, marks and scoring and fun are all equally important. I cannot say to parents or management that I cannot give desired results (Mona).*
>
> *This year I have 2-3 special children who keep coming to my desk and complaining, but I am taking it as a challenge. I am interested in how to get them to settle down (Gina).*

While Heena and Mona treat diversity as inevitable, Mona was also aware that academic achievement of all children is important; thus, conveying that all learners are valued. Gina in a positive display of attitude treats inclusion as a challenge for teachers. This attitude of accepting diversity was reiterated by the principal and vice-principals who said that the vision of their school was inclusion, and that all teachers were expected to be part of that journey. Most teachers were of the opinion that their school management speaks the language of inclusion, and hence the number of teachers who did not believe in inclusion was less as compared to other schools. Vice-principal VP2 shared a similar view, and said there was a conscious attempt by the school to at least get teachers to be neutral in their attitude towards inclusion, and that there have been teachers who left school because they could not fit in. Coordinator Flower said that the teachers for ECS-class were carefully chosen and it was ensured that they had the flexibility in strategies to handle a class with CWSN, a view shared by most coordinators. Special-educator Liva shared that some mainstream-teachers were understanding while some did get offended with some behaviours of CWSN. She said some of them came with the child and complained that he was misbehaving and that he should render an apology, not only to the teacher but to the entire class. The observations in Vignette-8#7 demonstrate the difference in attitude of teachers' towards classroom behaviour management and children' readiness for learning. While Ahana's approach did not display sensitivity for children to be settled before the class started; Mala ensured that children were relaxed and that she had their attention before she started the class. Anna's attitude shows the importance of sense of belonging in feeling included in the class.

Vignette-8#7

> *Ahana was observed to enter the classroom, and start writing on the blackboard without any introduction, and before children had packed up their material from the previous subject (observation).*
>
> *We need to be aware that children need time to switch between subjects. If they had Social Studies class before mine, and if I were to start Trigonometry, then the first 10 minutes of my class is wasted. Instead, if I engage them in something completely different for the first 5 minutes of the class, it helps them clear their memories and start afresh (coordinator Mala, interview).*
>
> *There is this one special child in my class, I have not been able to gain his confidence, try as I might. People say he has a problem, but I feel he can communicate, because he does communicate with few of his peers. Forget academics, I feel he must learn to communicate. Now after 4 months, when I ask him, he gives me a brief response (Anna, interview).*

An important finding that raises the question of self-efficacy of teachers was raised by a senior member of the SpEd team. She said that some mainstream-teachers felt a sense of failure when they referred CWSN to the SpEd team, and that she conveyed to them that working together was important for the betterment of the child. In a display of positive attitude, some counsellors raised the need for raising awareness in children on their (counsellor's) role in the school.

Vignette-8#8

> *I believe it is important that children know what is my job as counsellor. So, this year in the life skills class, I explained my role. After that some children came and spoke to me about their challenges in studies and socio-emotional areas. Often, they see me outside the class and share their concerns with me (primary-school counsellor Ruhi).*

Assessments are an important part of school life, and when children get a fair chance at these it enhances their self-esteem. Some teachers who were aware of this, displayed positive attitude and acted accordingly. For instance, Purva said, 'During the assessment some raise their hands to clarify doubts, some don't. But I know those who don't (but may need clarifications), so I go near their seat, which gives them a chance to seek me out'. Gina candidly shared an experience that demonstrates the open culture of the school and her positive attitude. She said, 'in the initial months of this year, some children in the class did not like me. They went and complained to the coordinator. I took it as a challenge, I changed by tactics…. now they are comfortable with me.' A few teachers displayed sensitivity when they interacted with CWSN; Mona said that when CWSN were treated differently in front of all (such as giving them special notes), they felt hurt; and felt that they needed to be included in the classroom consciously. Coordinator Nisha said that they explained to CWSN that 'they were not different or special, you are like the rest and have to read and write like the rest'. Coordinator Nimi said that though CWSN were given special attention, it was done without making them feel different. Coordinator Haiku said that they included CWSN in the main-classroom and made them feel normal. A common finding was that the intent to include CWSN in the main-classroom was genuine; however, the emphasis was on 'normal', and on 'not making them feel bad that they were different'. On a similar note, the usage of words and phrases such as 'special child', 'below-average child', 'behaviour child', 'counsellor child', 'drop my levels' and 'I don't expect much from this child because he is a special child' was quite common among teachers. A comment that was typical of many teachers was,

> *When I was first asked to teach in NIOS-class, I was told that I would not have to prepare much. I now realize that they are smart too, and it is I as a teacher who needs to reach out to them (Naty).*

While this does indicate that teachers are aware of the diversity in functioning levels, the terminology they use inadvertently conveys a deficit in the child and of not reaching normal functioning levels. While Naty concluded that children in NIOS section (who are predominantly CWSN) are 'smart' too, all teachers who teach this section may not necessarily conclude on similar lines. Teachers spoke about systems and processes that focused on the notion of 'normalcy', and hence children were forced to adhere to what was 'normal'. One noteworthy comment was by teacher Reji, who commented MPES should consider other forms of assessment (Section 7.2.2). Another instance cited by special-educator Veda was,

> *Today in a test, this boy had scribbled something illegible and wrong. I was sure that he could do better. After all were done, I asked this boy a few questions from that paper, and he answered all of them correctly and also gave me the spelling. I wonder if he was lazy and did not want to read, or was not in a mood that day; but I am sure that all children will respond with a little push.*

8.4 Chapter summary

Overall, there was a positive culture at MPES that encouraged building inclusive values such as building a community where all learners are valued and importance of awareness, inclusion and training. Mainstream-teachers acknowledged that special-educators were better equipped to train CWSN; formal and informal interactions were found between the mainstream-teachers and special-educators. In a few areas such as admission and ensuring continuity of SEN services active collaboration was noted. However, special-educators worked with CWSN primarily in the pull-out rooms; and collaboration between the two teams with respect to classroom was not found. Attitudes of teachers indicated that they were aware that they had to teach a diverse class; and that while some teachers were positive towards, some were neutral towards that. The need for different assessments was raised by a few teachers. A lack of appropriate vocabulary was noted among teachers thus inadvertently conveying a deficit in the child.

Chapter 9: Findings - Leadership

In this chapter I present findings from people who play an important role in the inclusion process, levels of leadership in MPES, aspects of leadership such as trust, accountability and the hierarchy in the school.

9.1 People in an important role in decision-making and practicing inclusion

Findings suggest that teachers, parents and children play an important leadership role in the school.

9.1.1 Role of teachers

The vice-principals of the school emphasised that it was a conscious decision to have multiple levels of active leadership, and that it was important to trust teachers. VP1 placed trust in the teacher and the self-efficacy of the teacher as central to the teaching-learning process.

Vignette-9#1

> *We find that every teacher is a leader. We need to promote them, make them feel important, make them feel their decisions are worthy. Until and unless she believes in herself, she can't motivate the 40 children in her class. She cannot tell the 40 in her class that you are responsible for yourself and your actions. So, each teacher is responsible for her class, her teaching, her lesson plan and delivery, making children complete work on time, correcting and giving feedback, communicating to the parents... working back to see if anything needs to be corrected from teachers' side and parent side... so unless trust is given to them you cannot see anything being implemented (vice-principal VP1).*

Teachers Priya and Uma had powerful thoughts on decision-making and accountability towards children's learning. Teacher Uma expressed that the ethos of the school was instrumental into transforming her into a better teacher.

Vignette-9#2

> *I feel very bad that I am not able to address that child with difficulties and include him in learning. Even in lunchbreak he would be by himself. I made it a point to speak to him, and then slowly he started speaking to me (Priya).*
>
> *When I joined MPES I had no idea of SEN or inclusion. I just knew them as kids with difficulties. It was difficult settling in. I got to know that they need something special, and I realized that I gave them that something special. I don't know what, maybe attention? I am not bothered about achievement; I can reason out with my coordinator. There is something about this school, that's why I changed. You can't change everybody, but you can change yourself (Uma).*

As reported in Vignette-6#3 (Section 6.3.2) and 6#6 (Section 6.3.3) some teachers were found to use inclusive approaches and paid attention to behaviour management. Teachers in pull-out rooms too displayed sensitivity in including children in learning. Whilst, some teachers were not found to adopt strategies to involve all children, like the social studies teacher in Vignette-6#2 (Section 6.3.2), who started the class without any warm-up activity; did not have any expectations of CWSN and did not use any strategy to involve them in her class; and teacher Madhuri who said that the 'bright kids' did not need any guidance and 'special kids' learn best in the resource-room.

> *We sensitize the class when the CWSN is not in the class. We say that all of us have difficulties and we need to help each other, we all have to face it and help each other. Slowly we see that many want to help this child. The complaints come down. We make the child comfortable with the class and class comfortable with the child (coordinator Nimi).*
>
> *Middle-school onwards, we speak to children in small and large groups, as well as individually. Speaking to a child about his behaviour and its impact on his peer relationships is crucial to ensure that he settles down in class. We discreetly find out his (CWSN's) friends; and involve them too in the group session (coordinator Mary).*

Teachers used strategies such as spreading awareness among children, peer support and self-regulation to encourage the feeling of being included in children. Teachers have a prominent role to play in implementing inclusion, and to that extent every teacher is a leader in her classroom. At MPES, some teachers displayed this trait. Teachers also have an important role as facilitators and in encouraging children to feel included and that they belong to the class.

9.1.2 Role of parents

The principal said parent-buddies, that is, pairing a parent who was new to the topic of SEN with a parent of a CWSN who had gone through this journey, helped. She explained about a parent-couple with whom the school has had a mutually supportive relationship, and described them as 'they have become the school's voice for inclusion, and are excellent examples of parents as leaders'. This couple became parent counsellors to other parents, and they have impacted other lives. Hanna highlighted the consequence when parents do not accept (the child's difficulties) or 'over-expect', and that they pass on their anxiety to their children. Coordinator Haiku on similar lines said parents of CWOSN might also contribute to the negative attitude of their children towards their friends with difficulties. She said,

> *Some parents feel the ECS-class is for dumb (sic) kids, please don't send my child…. When a child comes to ECS-class parents are worried about what will the society say? …. Some parents complain that you maybe an inclusive school, but why should my child suffer?*

MPES conducted parent workshops twice a year on topics such as parents' role and collaboration between the school and parents. Teachers felt that parental support improved their child's chances of being included at school. For example, Dasu said 'if we explain in school, and parent helps at home that is enough'. Maddy candidly said, 'you can see the difference between children with difficulties who have parental support and who don't'. Special-educators Flame and Veda said that it helped when parents communicated with them. They said that the child's planner was used for communicating with some parents who were supportive, and that the two-way communication was beneficial to the child. At MPES, besides helping children with their classwork, a few parents were advocates and mentors.

9.1.3 Role of children

Some teachers and children discussed the role of children in the process of inclusion. Coordinators Nimi and Mary accord equal importance to both CW&WOSN in ensuring that CWSN developed a sense of belonging to the class; and in the process highlighted the facilitating role of the teacher (Section 9.1.1). Counsellors Ruhi and Rani pointed instances where peer relationships depended on both groups of children (CW&WOSN); and the importance of looking into the points of view of both.

Vignette-9#3

> *Peer sensitization is very important because often CWSN complain about being teased in the class by some peers. I had a group discussion just before this interview with around 6-7 children from Class-4. There had been a difficult situation in the class involving a CWSN; and I was discussing with these children who were seen as leaders in the class on effective ways of handling such situations. After this, I will also talk to the CWSN who brought the issue to my attention and guide him too on his role in it (primary-school counsellor Ruhi).*
>
> *There was a boy with SEN in Class-9, who would often complain to me that his peers were being mean to him. I asked him for their names, observed them in the class and spoke to them; and found that on the contrary, they were trying to help him (high-school counsellor Rani).*
>
> *We involve a couple of mature children in the class. Sometimes when the substitute teachers come into class they may not be aware of these issues, at that*

> *time these couple of children are very supportive (middle-school coordinator Flower).*
>
> *In higher classes, children are aware that some of their friends have SEN. The class often rallies together and resolved issues such as inappropriate behaviour; the counsellors play a large role in this training. For example, in one of the classes, the children decided who among them would have a talk with the CWSN who lost his temper quite often in class (coordinator Rama).*
>
> *When I tried to talk to an aloof child who joined in Class-9; the class told me to leave him alone and that he has had traumatizing experiences in his previous school. The class was protective to him, and gave him time to settle down. Slowly, I see a change in that child (high-school teacher Dhruva).*

Interestingly counsellor Diya said that children from high-school (Classes-9 to 12) self-reported their issues such as not being able to mingle with friends and changes in their own behaviour. She also said that children from Classes-6 to 8, were reported by their teachers. Interviews with children revealed that student leaders had strong opinions on inclusion and SEN. High-school prefects categorically mentioned that providing opportunities to all students played an important role in inclusion (Vignette-7#4). Middle-school prefects recognized that all their friends had strengths; and displayed conviction in bringing about a change in their friends' attitudes towards SEN. Senior prefects displayed leadership skills and spoke to CWSN on their inputs in moving towards being more inclusive. They also highlighted the aspect of the need to understand their friends with SEN.

Vignette-9#4

> *We think that everybody cannot be good at everything. They will be good at something or the other. So instead of discriminating them. Let them to best in what they are good at. It's a little difficult to convince my friends who have difficulties when they do wrong things. But I just keep trying and then in the last they agree with me. Sometimes when I try to correct my other friends (CWOSN) who tease them (CWSN), they push me down and hurt me. But I don't feel anything. I don't get angry but try to convince them in a kinder way than screaming at them. We just need 5 or 10 mins of convincing and then they agree. Beginning of the year when we first became prefects, no one would listen to us. But now 95% of them listen to us (middle-school prefect).*
>
> *Our school is working forward to be a completely inclusive one, because recently we prefects interacted with students and found out what more needs to be done to make the school more inclusive. They said they all were happy. But we still think they (their peers with SEN) should stand up for their rights and demand. We get a broader vision because our school is inclusive. We feel like all people around*

> *us are just like us. But it's not so in the world, we need to learn to deal with them. Because just complaining doesn't work. We need to understand them (CWSN) (high-school prefects).*

Thus, all children have an important part in the process of inclusion. Some CWOSN were peers who support their friends and advocate for their friends. CWOSN too have an important role in being aware of their own challenges and its consequences on themselves and their friends. Teachers, parents and children had an important role in developing inclusion at MPES. While teachers were leaders and promoted inclusion in their classes, they also facilitated the involvement of children and parents in the process of inclusion. A few parents were advocates and mentors to other parents. CW&WOSN both were responsible for inclusion; a few prefects had positive and strong ideas about inclusion.

9.2 Leadership – aspects and types

The findings in this section focus on aspects of leadership such as shared vision, trust and accountability; multiple levels of leadership, responsibilities and decision-making at these levels; and respect for team-members.

9.2.1 Shared vision

Teachers mentioned that the coordinators, vice-principals and the principal were accessible and the management believed in inclusion. In particular, almost all who were interviewed spoke about the principal's commitment to inclusion; for instance, the vice-principal VP2 said that the principal underwent training in inclusion (Section 8.1) and coordinator Rama said that the principal did not deny admission to any child, whilst being fully aware of the impact it might have on the achievement of all children (Vignette-9#5). While most teachers were enthusiastic about it, some said that there was no other choice but to follow the system. Priya and Mira said that considering the difficulties in managing a class of 40 children; they preferred a system of segregation where CWSN would be in a different section and their needs would be addressed; Harini and Ahana said that having CWSN in the main-classroom was difficult when they had to complete portions. Two instances of the shared vision and the importance of accountability were shared by coordinators Pat and Mary. Pat displayed trust and patience in the system and said that in the first year of operation of NIOS, it was difficult to explain to all that it was not meant for only CWSN. It took time for the others to understand the benefits of the board; and that it was as valid as any other board. She was categorical that this change came about due to their principal and another active member of the management. The number of children in NIOS grew multifold from 1 student in the 2013 batch to about 100 in 2019. She said they conducted awareness camps amongst teachers, parents and children. Mary from the SpEd team was given the task of determining the awareness of inclusion in teachers. One of the conclusions drawn from the informal survey conducted among 100 teachers was that reaching out to specific teachers who they felt were more receptive would have a larger impact on increasing awareness on inclusion; rather than conducting group workshops. The month that I met Mary, she had met 25 teachers and had seen positive results such as making a list of observations in class and reaching out to the SpEd team for strategies they could use. These indicate that many in the teacher community shared a common vision of inclusion.

9.2.2 Roles, responsibilities and accountability at different levels of leadership

The principal said that there were multiple levels of leadership with well-defined roles and responsibilities (such as coordinator and HOD; and counsellors and special-educators in the SpEd team); and that autonomy was given to all these levels. For instance she outlined that every coordinator was like the 'de facto principal of the 600 children in that class'. This was endorsed by coordinator Rama who said that as a coordinator, she was empowered to take some decisions and knew the ones that she needed to go to the vice-principal or principal for. A common finding across the different levels (coordinators, teachers and SpEd team) was emphasis on academic performance, with the underlying awareness that not all children could score good marks. For instance, coordinators Mary and Rama mentioned the understanding displayed by the management, while teacher Tammy said that her coordinator understood. Special-educator Veda drew attention to an important aspect of learning – foundational skills.

Vignette-9#5

> *There is an emphasis on academic performance, especially in high-school; however, the management and the principal are aware that though it was desirable, it was not always possible for all children to score marks (coordinator Mary).*
>
> *My principal will not deny admission, they (management) are worried about results, but we also support children in all aspects (coordinator Rama).*
>
> *Coordinators do enquire when marks drop, but there is no pressure, they understand when I explain (Tammy).*

> *Our principal is very clear that she is not focusing only on marks. She says basics should be strong. It helps us focus on basic concepts and skill-building (special-educator Veda).*

The principal said that she had immense support from the management, and that they supported her in her vision. She said, ‘my management has faith in me, I have faith in my team. We put our strengths together and ensure that we will no way let a child down’. The principal has been instrumental in developing infrastructure in the school; bringing about changes in the processes of the school and improving human resources. Some examples were investing in smart boards in classrooms; bringing in exemptions for some subjects at the board examination levels for some children as early as 2007 and arranging for training in special education for a team of 50 teachers. She said that in 2010 they started the NIOS board with 3 children, and one special-educator; as the number of CWSN children increased the number of special-educators-increased; and in 2019 there were 12 members in the SpEd team. She said unlike other schools, the SpEd team was given the freedom to bring in new ideas. She said she decided to equip herself with more knowledge to implement inclusion and decided to pursue a higher education program in the USA. She said the experience there changed her outlook and she decided to streamline processes in MPES towards being more inclusive when she got back. There were instances of teachers’ suggestions for improvement being approved by the management. Counsellor Sam said,

> *We have this kind of sharing where management is open to our suggestions. Whatever provisions we need for the wellness of the child, they have been very supportive of that. When we started counselling 7 years back, we did not have a room, then came an open room. We then said we want a closed room, and then we said, we do not want it tucked away. They understood all these and accordingly made provisions.*

All coordinators said that though there was a hierarchy in the school, teachers knew that all levels of leadership were accessible. Maddy said, ‘I try to manage problems and issues by myself, but when there is a difficulty, I have sought help from the coordinator’. Coordinator Nimi said that they tried to solve most problems amongst themselves – the coordinator, class-teacher and counsellor; failing which they reach out to the vice-principal. Some (Hira, Shane, Uma, Mona) said the counsellors and coordinators were always available to clarify doubts and give guidance; and that there was no bureaucracy, they spoke to whoever was available. In the interview, Ruhi, a young counsellor shared this about her acceptance in the teacher community:

> *A year back I faced some difficulty because I do not have much teaching experience. However, it was because of my own self-image. I am okay now; I know that I am professional and qualified. And when I appear confident, I am accepted (counsellor Ruhi).*

Findings also reveal that most teachers and coordinators were not aware of a written school policy. The principal clarified that the school policy was more from the point of documentation for accreditation purposes. Thus, the robust and transparent hierarchy at MPES made it easy for staff to approach their peers and seniors according to the situation. The findings also reveal that MPES has multiple levels of leadership accompanied with responsibilities and accountabilities.

9.2.3 Active presence of the principal

Teachers also mentioned the active presence of the principal in MPES; for instance, teacher Ritu said, 'the other day, my principal was passing by my class; she peeped in and after checking with me, decided to address the class; she spoke to the children about their experiences in school and gave them a couple of pointers on how to study and have fun too'. The principal also was in direct contact with most teachers. Heena said, 'our principal talks to everybody, all children, and expects us to work with them, we all follow that'. The principal's actions set direction and conveyed that all learners were valued in the school. When I went to interview her, I noticed that there was a child sitting in a small room just beside her room and explained that,

> *As I was walking in, for 2-3 days I noticed that this child would sometimes just sit with her father in the lobby or play in the ground and go back home, she was refusing to enter the classroom. I told her that she can sit in the unit adjoining my office and her dad can sit outside. Then slowly I asked her if she would like to read some books; then copy notes done in the class. Now, I get her to run some errands such as going to a classroom and giving a note to her teacher. Gradually, we will ensure that she goes back to the classroom (principal).*

Anna shared incidents that exemplify the direct interaction of the principal with children too. She said she had an anxious child in her class who would want to speak to the principal frequently, and she was allowed to do so. She mentioned another child who suddenly developed exam-related anxiety. She said that one day during an informal interaction she mentioned it to the principal, who immediately addressed the child, and assured the child that she could talk to her anytime. She said that the child felt that the school cared for her.

9.3 Chapter summary

The leadership at MPES was hands-on and supportive. There were multiple levels of leadership with clear roles, responsibilities and accountability. Instances of shared vision, such as Pat who displayed trust and patience in the systems of the school and Mary who strategized to reach out to teachers after an informal survey on inclusion were also noticed. Leaders at all levels are seen as people of action or in other words ‘doers’. While there was a hierarchy, leaders at all levels were deemed approachable.

Chapter 10: Discussion

An exploratory study on the nature of inclusion in a school involves looking at various aspects including description of inclusion and SEN, placement options for CWSN, interactions between teachers and children, systems and processes, teaching strategies, decision-making processes and people, and leadership. These were done by using the three RQs on description of inclusion and SEN at MPES, exploring the MoI followed at MPES, provisions made to include children and exploring leadership roles at MPES. The findings were analysed using the themes identified in the thematic framework (Table 5.6, Section 5.7), which were: a) model of inclusion – this is the model of provisions by MPES to include all learners b) description of SEN – to examine how MPES understands SEN c) school and classroom practices – to understand the systems and processes of MPES d) participation, achievement, social inclusion as indicators of inclusion (e) school culture which is an important determinant of an inclusive school and (f) leadership to understand the influential people involved in decision-making and the style of leadership. In this chapter I discuss findings under these themes with respect to the RQs and literature.

10.1 Model of Inclusion

The placement structure in a school, or the MoI has an effect on the provisions by schools for CWSN. In its commitment to inclusion, MPES follows a multilevel Model of Inclusion (Diagram 6.1 and 6.2, Section 6.1) consisting of main-classrooms and pull-out rooms (ECS-class and resource-room) to reach out to diverse learners. This is similar to the MTSS model followed in the USA (Lemons *et al*., 2018), though no teacher in this study made a reference to it or used the term. The multilevel system helped in bridging the discrepancy between their actual functioning levels and desired functioning levels as per chronological age. According to Lemons *et al*., (2018) one of the benefits of the MTSS system is movement across the continuum of services as children pick up skills and knowledge. In Jha's (2010) study on inclusive schools in Delhi (India), different models of inclusion emerged. One school had a segregated physical setting in a different location for CWSN, another had a separate classroom in the main school and the last one did not have a special classroom for CWSN. While the first two schools had special-educators, the last one did not. The government and private schools in Sawhney's (2015) study in Hyderabad, had CWSN in their schools, but had made no changes to the infrastructure, or at the teaching and evaluation stages. The private school had limited provisions such as a reader and extra time for CWSN in the examinations. At MPES the multilevel system was well-utilized by the school. Teachers quoted instances where children were moved from Level-3 to Level-2, and from Level-2 to Level-1. Priya (Vignette-6#1, Section 6.1.1) discusses the dilemma and challenges of not being able to reach out to all children in a diverse classroom such as difficulties in attending to a child who needs high support in a main-classroom. This was similar to a finding from a study conducted in 10 government primary schools in North India, where teachers expressed a similar challenge in reaching out to CWSN in their class (Bansal, 2018). In a class of 40 children and one teacher, it may not be possible to bridge the gaps in functioning levels. Not addressing those gaps might lead to widening the gap, and would have a cascading effect in academics as well as socio-emotional domains. Providing focused inputs to address these gaps in learning quite often does help to some extent. This continuum of services reflects what Norwich (2002, p.484) terms as ‘connective specialization’, where educating CWD is seen as a ‘field with inherent connections to education overall, but also a respected distinctiveness’. Similarly, Hornby (2015) suggests that there will always be some CWSN who cannot be included in the main classroom. McMahon *et al*., (2016) argue that students with severe disability may not benefit from a main-classroom, even with curricular supports.

Teachers and children at MPES reported that pull-out rooms were beneficial in working at the functioning level of the CWSN (Vignette-6#4, Section 6.3.2), gave more space and time for the teacher to address the CWSN and for CWSN to clarify their doubts; and helped in having a conducive atmosphere in the main-classroom when children with behaviour issues were pulled-out. While pull-out rooms helped in working at the child’s functioning level, this also reflected in the lowering of expectations and increased leniency towards CWSN (Section 6.3.2). Travers (2011) rightly points out that there are concerns with in-class support on the lines of efficiency and effectiveness as well as withdrawal-from-class measures such as stigma and missing out on what is done in class. In my study, children reported that going to the pull-out rooms helped them score better and made them feel more included in the informal groups that children form; thus, increasing their sense of belonging. Lemons *et al*., (2018) concur and state that CWD who are taught in resource-rooms have made academic gains. Though behaviour was a criterion to pull-out CWSN from main-classroom, no teacher made a specific mention of behaviour management strategies that were taken up in the pull-out rooms. The number of children in the pull-out rooms being less than the main-classroom, led to more active engagement in the process of learning; this probably led to more appropriate behaviour and more learning. Literature suggests that when students perceive that they are receiving enough support from their teachers, the risk of negative incidences related to behaviour may be lowered, especially among those who might be prone to behavioural outbursts (Pesonen *et al.*, 2016). On similar lines Ainscow and Cesar (2006) highlight the importance of examining the nature of relationships and approaches to teaching and learning in understanding behavioural concerns.

At MPES, teachers in the main-classrooms had a broad lesson plan and followed the textbook and workbooks made by the curriculum department; however, inadequate material and planning was noticed in the pull-out rooms. For example, children were taught reading, spelling and concepts in the pull-out rooms; an evaluation of generalization of these skills in the main-classroom is a necessary and measurable outcome that needs to be included as part of the process. When children are pulled-out of the main-classroom, the time they spend in the pull-out rooms must lead to a greater benefit. Hence planning, implementing and evaluating the outcomes of these sessions in the pull-out rooms should be of paramount importance (Travers, 2011). When CWSN were pulled-out from main-classrooms, they receive what is termed as “special education services”; which may not count as full inclusion. Norwich (2002) acknowledges this and states that inclusion cannot accommodate diversity without dedicated support systems. These dedicated support systems could be pull-out rooms, and accommodations such as large print and readers; which may be needed only for a minority of children and not all. Some important aspects of special education include intensive and goal-directed instruction focused on individual need, different methods of teaching and curriculum, monitoring students’ progress and responsibility for changing instructions when insufficient progress is made (Lemons *et al.*, 2018; Hornby, 2015). Travers (2011) argues that withdrawal support measures have been remiss on providing what children need in terms of learning. Thus, MPES follows a multilevel MoI, where children are pulled-out only for English and/or Math. In the pull-out rooms teachers worked closer to the child’s functioning level; adequate preparation of teaching and learning material will increase the efficiency of this system.

It is important to meet individual needs of children and promote inclusive values; the combination of main-classrooms and pull-out rooms gives scope for the same.

10.2 Description of SEN

Understanding teachers' views on SEN is an important objective in this study on inclusion. Teachers described SEN in three main ways: 1) using terms such as LD and ADHD; though it was not always based on a formal diagnosis 2) in relation to behaviour and 3) as a result of difficulties faced in learning and classroom (Table 7.1, Section 7.1.1). Usage of inappropriate terminology that located the disability as child-centric such as 'counsellor child', 'slow child' and 'LD child' was also observed. This is consistent with Jha's (2010) finding that when children did not do well in studies, teachers used their own identifiers. It is important to have an indicative name to denote a child's difficulty; and creating awareness of appropriate terminology in the school community to draw attention to the strengths and needs of a child / group of children is essential. It otherwise will lead to names and labels that draw undue attention to the child's difficulty and may cause a stigma. In the Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002), the authors rightly state that though the language of SEN can be a barrier to inclusive practices in schools, it remains part of the culture and policy framework. Demetriou (2020) presents two contrasting views – one that states effectiveness of labels are limited, draws attention towards special education and not inclusive practices and can be stigmatizing; and the other view that points towards the informative elements of SEN labels that are needed by teachers for planning their teaching. Srivastava *et al*., (2017) in their study on 89 Indian school teachers found that teachers had extremely low knowledge on ADHD, dyslexia, ID and ASD. However, they found that when the characteristics associated with these were described, teachers said they were able to pinpoint children in their class who fit under it. Interestingly, Uma said that she was not aware of SEN, until she was introduced to this concept at MPES; and that she thought that CWSN were children with 'low-average functioning' or 'aloof children' (Vignette-7#2, Section 7.1.2). Or Shane who when requested to clarify her response in the questionnaire on 'difficult to differentiate between CWSN and below-average children', expressed in the interview on her dilemma between 'special child', 'slow learner', 'normal children' and 'below average child who is lazy'. Hence, I opine that by not describing a SEN, children who need accommodations and provisions maybe left out from the continuum of services. Norwich (2014) rightly states that the move from language of disability towards language of diversity; also meant moving away from learner characteristics. This may sometimes result in taking the focus away from genuine challenges faced by people with difficulties. In a contrasting opinion, the Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) states that the term ‘barriers to learning and participation’ instead of SEN can be used to direct attention to the child’s needs and in improving learning, while SEN as a label lead to lowered expectations. Summarizing, knowledge about SEN and it effect on learning and social-emotional outcomes is important for teachers to include all children and to strategize their lessons. At MPES, teachers were aware of SEN but used labels that were inappropriate. A system of labelling that is factual, useful for lesson-planning and interacting with CWSN and not stigmatizing will help MPES in its drive towards being more inclusive.

10.3 School and classroom practices

The inclusion of any child depends to a large extent on the practices of the school, and in the multiple interactions with various people that the child has during the day. At the school level MPES had standard practices such as CWSN were pulled-out of the main-classroom only for Math and/or English, they were together for rest of the day and all children could participate in extra-curricular activities. One of the strengths of MPES was the emphasis on processes such as preparation of curriculum, assessments and assessment of SEN. In a large school, this ensured that there was uniformity in different sections of the same class; and across classes. The multilevel MoI being followed provided for children to be in the same classroom for most parts of the school day except for Math and/or English. It was interesting that no teacher used terminology such as ‘inclusive approach, DI, UDL’, teachers also mentioned that they did not know how to reach out to all children and address behaviour issues. Teachers mentioned practices such as extra time to finish assessments, preferential seating for CWSN, reader and/or scribe for examinations – these findings are in line with similar studies in India in both rural and urban schools, where teachers rely on a limited set of pedagogical practices to engage and include all children (Johansson *et al.*, 2021). Instances of inclusive approaches were observed or narrated by teachers in interviews; Table 10.1 maps some instances and their relationship with inclusive approaches.

Instance / example	**DI**	**UDL**
Adapted text; notes for lessons; worksheets at different levels	Adaptation of content	Multiple means of representation
Flowcharts, mind-maps	Adaptation of content	Multiple means of representation
Using simpler terms to explain concepts	Adaptation of process	Multiple means of representation
Giving specific and explicit instructions for tasks such as solving a problem and taking notes from the board	Adaptation of process	Multiple means of representation
A lesson plan that includes discussion, reading and writing (Vigentte-6#2, Section 6.3.2)	Adaptation of process	Multiple means of representation Multiple means of engagement
Modified-question-papers	Adaptation of outcomes	Multiple means of expression
Changing the lesson-plan for the day based on the class temperament, yet doing something relevant to the lesson (Vigentte-6#2 and 6#5, Section 6.3.2) Bringing in connections across subjects, real-life examples Detailed lesson plan, laying down ground rules, rapport-building, responsibility for their own behaviour, readiness for class (Vignette-6#6, Section 6.3.3)	Not applicable	Multiple means of engagement

Table 10.1: Mapping teachers' strategies to pedagogy

Schools such as MPES that are taking steps towards being more inclusive would benefit significantly from highlighting the pedagogy associated with teachers' practices. Very often teachers come up with strategies, based on class dynamics and the immediate need; when these are reflected upon and outcomes of the strategy are evaluated it adds to the library of strategies that a teacher has. Further, when these are understood against the backdrop of theory and pedagogy they add to a rich body of knowledge. Hence, I argue that theoretical knowledge when understood against the rich experiences that teachers have in their classrooms leads to tangible learning for teachers and their professional development. For example, teachers mentioned that they used flowcharts and mind-maps for teaching which is adaptation of process (DI) or multiple means of representation (UDL). However, no teacher mentioned that they gave the option of letting the children draw mind-maps or flowcharts to express their understanding – which would mean adaptation of outcome (DI) or multiple means of action and expression (UDL). In a similar finding, Lemons *et al*., (2018) report that students with LD receive little differentiated instruction in the main-classroom. Another concept in DI - adjusting common instruction for tasks – has been found to increase clarity, access, rigor and relevance has a significant impact on student engagement and learning (Bondie, 2019). Knowledge of strategies such as these and incorporating these in their lesson plans would help teachers in addressing the learner diversity in their classes. For example, the Class-6 science teacher in Vignette-6#3 (Section 6.3.2), could have used 'adjusting common instructions' a strategy in DI. Giving options such as drawing on the board, labeling the columns, and using spelling flash cards would have ensured that the activity was accessible to most children. This approach might also ensure that the teacher attends to individual differences, while avoiding the stigma of marking some children as different which is an important aspect of inclusive pedagogy. Thus, differentiation can be a valuable strategy for supporting learning for everyone and not just for CWSN (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011). Proactive behaviour management an important feature of UDL was observed when Raja (Vignette-6#6, Section 6.3.3) gave a CWSN in her class the option of stepping out when he found the noise levels in the class unbearable and when Mala (Vignette-8#7, Section 8.3) invested time in building readiness of the class towards learning; thus, looking at barriers that could impede inclusion.

In the pull-out rooms, owing to the smaller group sizes, teachers were observed to interact with all children. Children who were in the ECS-class answered the regular question paper; some were given the modified-question-paper and support was given for reading or for scribing as per the child's needs. Along the same lines Travers (2011) report that withdrawing children has benefits such as greater use of materials, enhanced learning space, time benefits and an opportunity to work at the student's level. However, even in the pull-out rooms it was noticed that alternate forms of assessment such as oral, or expressing in a graphic form was not used. As an exception special-educator Veda elicited verbal answers from a CWSN in the resource-room in a formal assessment (Section 8.3). Children who were in the resource-room had skill deficits in the area of reading, writing, and math; but it was observed that a well-planned evaluation of skills was not conducted as the term progressed. Monitoring progress and using it for feedback is an important aspect of education. MPES has a calendar of assessments as part of its processes; these extant assessments can be used in a more structured way to move towards data-based-intervention system. McLeskey and Waldron (2015) include a 'data system that monitors student progress' as one of the three must-haves for an effective inclusive school. Teachers in MPES were seen to conduct regular dictations, timed informal tests in math and quiz in main-classes and pull-out rooms. These extant measures can be used as measures to feed into a data-driven system of student progress. Overall, the processes at MPES brought in uniformity in practices such as curriculum completion, assessments and accommodations. Some teachers at MPES used approaches that are inclusive in approach, but most were unaware of the pedagogy. Teachers in pull-out rooms used more special education practices than teachers in main-classroom that helped in bridging the skill discrepancy of CWSN. Combining theory with practice will result in teachers adopting inclusive pedagogy at various levels in the teaching and learning process. Feedback from assessments that are being regularly conducted can be planned better to use as feedback into a data-based-intervention system.

10.4 Indicators of inclusion: participation, achievement and social inclusion

Participation, achievement and social inclusion are a few important parameters that emerged from the review of literature and findings as a way to understand the inclusivity of a school, which is an important aim of this study. Analysis of data reveals the nature of interrelationship between these three parameters; and the dynamic nature of these in different situations for the same child. The multilevel MoI followed in MPES ensured that all children were part of a common classroom for most parts of the day except Math and/or English. The quotes in Vignette-7#4 (Section 7.1.2) and Section 7.2 indicate that one of the thoughts that teachers had was that children should be given an opportunity to be part of the main-classroom. Flower had a view that reflected a social and capabilities approach and said that all 40 children in the class are unique individuals, and that they all need to feel they belong to the same classroom and have something common to learn, thus drawing attention to the importance of sense of belonging in children and the fact that school is a place of learning for all children. These instances highlight that participating together in the common activity of learning heightens a sense of belonging thus leading to feeling socially included. However, the illustrative examples in Vignette-7#5 (Section 7.2.1) highlight that sometimes children (both W&WOSN) were part of the class physically, but did not appear to be involved in the activities of the class. Taking a slightly different approach, Purva expressed that CWSN need to be in the resource-room 'for their own benefit' for some parts of the day. On a similar note, Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017) propose that all inclusion implies exclusion. However, while the expectation is that all children would feel included, physical presence of children in the same classroom does not mean participation. Thus, a child may be physically included in the classroom but not socially or psychologically. Hence, Pesonen *et al*., (2016, p.60) described sense of belonging as 'the extent to which an individual feels included, respected, accepted and supported by others in different social contexts'. The pull-out rooms helped in increasing the support available for some children, which may increase their sense of belonging. Pesonen *et al*., (2016) concur that CWSN might require a wide range of individualised support in order to feel a sense of belonging.

A few teachers were in favour of pull-out rooms; and justified it with the 'low levels of functioning' of CWSN. Teachers in the main-classroom mentioned that having CWSN affected the progress of the class, and that they would be able to teach more and at a faster pace if CWSN were not in the same class. Thus indirectly, including CWSN in main-classroom meant lower academic attainment for the class. Though teachers mentioned that all children in the class should be given opportunities to participate; interview and observation data revealed that in a large class of about 40 children in each class, the differentiation in instruction, process and outcome needed to reach out to all children with just one teacher was an operationally difficult task. Teachers did use strategies such as role-play, mind-maps and flowcharts, project work, calling out children to the board, going to the children's desk to clarify; some specific instances where teachers tried to involve all children are elaborated in Vignette-6#3 (Section 6.3.2). In the pull-out rooms children got more chances to participate (Vignette-7#7, Section 7.2.1), teachers worked closer to the child's functioning levels. Most children who were interviewed mentioned that the pull-out rooms helped them learn, and when they did better academically, it improved their chances of belonging to a group. Thus, participation and achievement are interrelated and are different in different situations. When CWSN are pulled-out of the classroom, they are excluded from the main-classroom, but findings reveal that there is increased participation and a sense of achievement and belonging in pull-out rooms; which sometimes is carried on to the main-classroom too. Alluding to Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017) classification, children experience different degrees of inclusion at different levels and in different arenas. Norwich (2014) concurs that some degree of withdrawal (pulling-out) to separate settings increases engagement in learning for some children.

Findings also reveal the changing nature of social inclusion during different parts and spaces in a school day for all children. The principal clearly articulated that social interaction in school starts right from the bus ride to school and continues into the classroom and playground. Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017) emphasise on the arenas of inclusion, an important dimension of inclusion. Not only did most CWSN say that going to pull-out rooms helped them feel included; they also said that the common extra-curricular periods and lunch-time were parts of the day they looked forward to because it gave them a chance to be with the larger group. However, one CWSN said that he felt lost in a large group and didn't look forward to the sports class. In a similar finding Soulis *et al*., (2016) report that the attitude of CWOSN was not positive toward CWSN in games; and emphasise the need for actively involving all children in common activities to foster the development of positive feelings among all children. Interestingly, a CWOSN who was interviewed mentioned that he didn't look forward to the sports period because he was not good at sports and hence was not selected by any team. He added that his friend with CWSN, who goes to the resource-room is much sought after in the sports period. On similar lines, some high-school teachers and counsellors said that exclusion happens with CWOSN as well. Behaviour emerged as a prominent deterrent for being included. Children who exhibited behaviour such as physical aggressions, verbal abuse or incessant laughter were more likely to be not included by their peers. A few teachers and the high-school prefects also pointed out that both CW&WOSN were responsible for inclusion. For instance, Purva who asserted that children with behaviour issues need a separate classroom for part of the day; also raised an important point that the classroom atmosphere and the other children too may be contributors to the disturbance in the classroom environment. Thus, children's sense of belonging and hence feeling socially included changes according to the situations they are in. Pesonen *et al*., (2016) state that CWSN must modify their behaviour to feel accepted; and that adaptation of behaviour might conceal their unique characteristics, leading to feelings of isolation and loneliness; and ultimately may have a negative impact on their sense of belonging. They rightly say that a school climate that makes students feel valued and cared for without having to conceal their SEN characteristics fosters a strong inclusive climate. In my study, some findings also reveal that when CW&WOSN are together from a young age, CWSN do get accepted for what they were. Soulis *et al*., (2016) sum it up aptly that understanding the beliefs of CW&WOSN and their consequences on their academic and social development is important since these also influence the learning process and classroom relational dynamics.

In an inclusive system, the indicators of inclusion are equally important for CWOSN. Children from MPES participate regularly in competitions amongst schools and bring accolades to the school in various activities such as Olympiad (national level competitions), debates, sports and arts. The processes and activities of the school such as worksheets at different functioning levels, periodic assessments, group discussions and project work; annual day and sports day provide opportunities for all children to participate. A middle-school prefect summarized it aptly and said ‘in our school there is no chance to get bored, there is always something to do. You get joy when you are learning many and new things’. In my opinion this is an example of a child who feels physically, socially and psychologically included; a phenomenon that classifies as total inclusion (Qvortrup and Qvortrup, 2017). The dilemma expressed by some teachers in gearing up for CWSN indicates that teachers were aware that inclusion was about participation, achievement and social inclusion of all children.

Findings reveal that achievement was mainly measured in terms of marks scored in tests; however, teachers did mention that not all children could score well. The underlying emphasis placed on achievement of all children was clearly articulated by Mona who said, ‘marks and scoring and fun are all equally important. I cannot say to parents or management that I cannot give desired results’ (Vignette-8#6, Section 8.3). All teachers said that the coordinators and the management understood the importance of achievement as being relative; that an increase in marks from 50% to 65% for a CWSN was also considered as achievement. It was also noticed that this was expressed along with a lowering of expectations; such as ‘he can only this much; he came up to at least 50%'; a fact expressed by Florian (2014) as well that identification of additional support needs is quite often accompanied with lowering of expectations. The processes at MPES ensured that accommodations and provisions were made for CWSN; however, the reliance was on written tests. Norwich (2014) rightly states that some practical issues in IE include factors such as conventional written literacy standards that may not be easily alterable keeping in mind the majority of children who can access them. In the pull-out rooms where teachers worked on academic skills, assessments specifically designed to evaluate progress in acquisition of academic skills would be good motivators for teachers and children; and would also contribute to data-based-intervention. Assessing the application of this skill in the main-classroom would be an important indicator of achievement as well. There were some encouraging incidents of measuring achievement such as: (a) Counsellor Hope shared that when CWSN who came to the resource-room were comfortable with reading sections of the text, she shared it with the classroom teacher; and that when CWSN read those sections in the classroom; it increased their sense of achievement and belonging; (b) Special-educator Shirly said it was important that when CWSN who would not write at all started to answer in phrases, that was a measure of achievement; (c) Hira mentioned setting intermediate goals and recognising the attainment of those goals as achievement; (d) since there was emphasis on writing notes in MPES, an increase in the ability to take down notes was recognized as achievement too and (e) Special-educator Veda elicited verbal answers in an assessment conducted in the resource-room. While teachers mentioned strategies such as role-play, group projects, discussions, mind-maps for teaching; none of them mentioned that they use these in assessments or for measuring achievement. As an exception Reji argued that MPES must look at other means of measuring achievement besides written assessments. These resonate with Reindal's (2016) observation that inclusion from the capabilities approach has the potential to assess equality from the perspective of functionings and capabilities. Most coordinators said that the achievement figures were calculated separately for CW&WOSN, and the important thing was to maintain a high-average of marks for CWOSN. I align with Reindal's (2016) views based on the capabilities approach that even if learning outcomes are poor, a school that is truly inclusive should focus on how inclusion can be practised for better solutions. Analysing children's functionings and capabilities would help in improving the systems of the school to improve inclusion. Fore III *et al*., (2008) categorically state that effective interventions have combined intensive and reasonable individual instruction, with frequent and careful monitoring of student progress. Also, that CWSN may not achieve their potential in inclusive settings because they lack individual instruction; and CWSN in separate settings may fall short of their academic potential due to lack of access to general curriculum. Pesonen *et al*., (2016) pertinently state that some main factors in increasing the sense of belonging and in turn academic learning for CWSN were when they formed trusting relationships with teachers, received support from teachers and when instructions were individualized.

Summarizing, the multilevel MoI at MPES enhanced participation, achievement and social inclusion – parameters crucial to inclusion - in most CWSN. Most CWSN looked forward to being with their peers thus expressing a sense of belonging or being included at the psychological level too. At the physical level, all CWSN were included in the main-classroom for most parts of the day or in other words many arenas. The degree to which they were included varied from full-time to inclusion in some parts of the day to exclusion in some parts of the day. There were instances were CWOSN too did not participate or were excluded. Teachers and children were aware that both CW&WOSN were responsible for inclusion. Achievement of CW&WOSN was important to teachers. Participation, achievement and social inclusion were interrelated and changes in one parameter had an effect on another.

10.5 Culture, Teacher Attitudes, Collaboration and Shared Responsibility

I opine that culture, collaboration and shared responsibility are important provisions made by schools in the process of inclusion.

10.5.1 Culture at MPES

The culture of the school is determined by factors including processes and practices of the school, teachers' attitudes, collaboration among different stakeholders in the school and shared responsibility among teachers. Booth and Ainscow (2002) place 'creating inclusive cultures' as central to development of inclusion. Findings from (Chapter 8) reveals that at MPES there was some emphasis on building a community. The vice-principals and principal were aware that inclusion is a process and is developed over a period of time, of the importance of training teachers and of having leaders at different levels. Sebba and Ainscow (1996) argue that any definition of inclusion should indicate it as a process rather than a state. The poster on inclusion (Appendix-11) displayed prominently in the school corridor uses appropriate words such as valuing all, diversity, everybody's responsibility; thus pointing towards the positive stance being taken by MPES. Leaders at different levels also mentioned the importance of the training and knowledge of different professionals such as special-educators and counsellors, and the importance of listening to student's voices (Section 8.1.1). Vignette-8#1, 8#2 and 8#3 (Section 8.1.1) are instances that give us a glimpse into the culture at MPES. They indicate that the principal has a pragmatic approach to inclusion that reflects the intent of the school to be inclusive, while highlighting the importance of other associated concepts such as exclusion and marginalization. The concept of robust diversity mentioned by her allude to a social and capabilities approach to disability. Vice-principal VP2 focuses on the importance of the social milieu in which schools exist, thus indicating an approach based on the social model of disability. Vice-principal VP1's statement reflects the operational challenges of implementing inclusion, and the impact on expectations from CWSN. Thus, the principal and vice-principals together were committed to inclusion, while being aware of the challenges. My observations (Section 9.2.1, 9.2.3) at MPES reveal the firm shared commitment towards inclusion by the principal, vice-principals, a few coordinators and teachers that not only motivates them to believe in all children; but also induces this belief in other teachers. These allude to the concept of personal and collective agency, which is shared knowledge, skills and synergy among members (Bandura, 2000 in Lyons, *et al*., 2016); which is an important concept in developing IE. Instances such as Lisa who mentioned that SEN is not a disability, but a difficulty; Rama who said people are alike yet different and that people who are differently-abled may have a skill that has the potential to be developed and the middle-school prefects' view that everybody would be good at something or the other hover on the notion of celebrating disabilities as a difference, an important concept in the social model of disability (Section 3.2.2). Ahana made a pertinent point in drawing a parallel between the child's presence and acceptance in the family and school (Vignette-6#1, Section 6.1.1) and stated 'will you keep away CWSN from others at home'. Instances such as these also resonate with the principals' concept of roust diversity. These convey a culture where all children are valued and are seen as contributing members. These also reflect the attitude of some teachers to consider the concept of functionings and potential viewpoint from the capabilities approach (Section 3.2.3). The observation by Sebba and Ainscow (1996) that, when schools move forward in their inclusive practices, there would be a general impact on how teachers perceive themselves and their work, and that CWSN would be seen in a more positive light seems pertinent here. The high-school prefects displayed great maturity in saying everyone should get equal opportunities to explore and that SEN cannot be a barrier to that process; while the middle-school prefects believed that all children are ‘good at something or the other’ - thus indicating their thoughts along the lines of the capabilities approach. Thus, across levels there were signs of a positive, encouraging and empowering culture.

The principal knew almost everyone in the school as reported by most teachers, and had an appreciating word or an enquiry about their families and lives when she spoke to them. DeMatthews *et al*., (2020) report that trusting relationships are formed when principals display care for the teachers and respects them as individuals. Leaders at different levels spoke about trust in their colleagues – the principal and vice-principals said they trusted the teachers and coordinators; teachers said their coordinators trusted them. McLeskey and Waldron (2015) highlight the importance of trust in relationships at the core in building an inclusive school culture. Most coordinators shared that the principal understood that not all children can score high marks and the focus was on learning the concepts (Vignette-9#5, Section 9.2.2); the principal said that for her achievement was equivalent to happiness (Section 7.2), and ensuring that all children who came to her school were happy was of utmost importance to her. The principal also said that the school gets a 100% pass at the board exam; and to her it’s a matter of pride that the school produces happy and confident students. On a similar note, Cranston (2013) raises the issue of accountability (to scoring in standardized tests) against professional responsibility to see that children develop holistically. The importance in building a culture that accepts and values all learners is also deeply interlinked with leadership. Collaboration, communication and attitudes of teachers are important determinants of culture and are discussed in the sections that follow.

10.5.2 Attitudes of teachers

Attitudes of teachers towards inclusion, special education and CWSN; their own capabilities in teaching and self-efficacy play a key role in the process of inclusion. While attitude is a construct that depends on an individual and his/her own training, there also exists a reciprocal relationship between school culture and teacher attitudes. An encouraging school culture would lead to more positive attitude in teachers; and the positive attitude of teachers would have a positive impact on the culture of the school. According to Osiname (2018, p.66), two characteristics of a strong culture are: (a) culture as a system of informal rules spells out how people are to behave and (b) culture may enable people to feel better about what they do, and thus, they are more likely to work harder. At MPES, the placement of CWSN in a teacher's class was not a choice given to the teachers. Since the principal, vice-principals and most coordinators conveyed an attitude of acceptance of diversity, many teachers too said that they have to accept the diversity in the class indirectly indicating that they did not have a choice (Vignette-8#6, Section 8.3). In interviews, teachers did mention barriers such as large class size, insufficient teacher resources and training. A study conducted in an urban and a rural school in Telangana, another state in India also reports that teachers have a positive attitude towards inclusion (Rose *et al*., 2021). Along the same lines, Bansal (2018) report that while majority of the government primary-school teachers in North India agreed that children should be educated in mainstream classrooms, they were not sure of the IE practices to be used. They identified large classrooms, assessment policies and lack of support and training as main barriers. In a similar finding, Paliokosta and Blandford (2010) report that in their study, the tendency was for the teachers to have a positive stance towards inclusion, but then they mentioned barriers such as lack of training and support and tendency to treat all children as having same needs, while it cannot be true, were presented in teachers' more extended narratives. Some coordinators and members of the SpEd team did mention that there were teachers who did not share the inclusive vision of the school. Similarly, the response to the challenges in handling the diversity in the class were mixed. Some teachers were proactive, some took it up as a challenge, some sounded helpless, some conveyed a sense of failure in themselves and a few argued for a separate classroom on that basis. Some teachers displayed sensitivity when dealing with CWSN and consciously avoided drawing attention to their challenges or accommodations. Coordinator Mary said that she engages in one-on-one conversations with teachers who are not aligned to inclusion. Likewise, DeMatthews *et al*., (2020) opine that leaders may need to engage in conversations that question the pre-existing notions of disability and look at new perspectives. The finding that some teachers had a positive attitude and some neutral towards inclusion is small but significant and in line with Johansson *et al*., (2021) finding in a rural setting and Shah *et al*., (2016) in an urban setting.

Vignette-8#7 (Section 8.3) demonstrates contrasting examples of positive attitude leading to an informed and inclusive strategy (Mala); while absence of positive attitude reduces the readiness of class to learning (Ahana). However, it is important to highlight that in the interview, Ahana was of the view that CWSN should be included in the class and mingle with other children (Vignette-6#1, Section 6.1.1). She also said that time and syllabus were constraints that do impede; while teachers like Mala and Dhruva were more inclusive in their methods. Reji had mentioned in the questionnaire that she prefers having CWSN in the main-classroom; and that in order to involve them, she made sure that she asked questions at their level to involve them in the discussion. In the interview, she said she made differential worksheets, and that 'below-average' children do well with the present MoI in the main-classroom. She also emphasised the need to look for other forms of assessment and not just written ones. Naty had mentioned in the questionnaire that 'sit with children and work at their own pace' was a strategy that she used. In the interview she used words such as 'rapport-building, bright class, pulling-up the down children, using their strengths to encourage them, and the NIOS class is also bright'. Instances such as these highlight the positive attitude of some teachers, but also reinforces the need for continued professional development, where teachers are encouraged, their ideas are given a platform to be implemented and facilitated in planning for a classroom that is inclusive. This will also help in building a collective agency and shared belief and vision (Section 11.3.3). Sharma and Jacobs (2016) suggest that success of IE is largely dependent on the preparedness of teachers, and their beliefs and skills in teaching a diverse class; and that negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusion can result in failure of inclusive reforms. In this study, it was observed that while there was an intent to genuinely help CWSN, there was also a strong expectation of helping them be 'normal' and 'making them feel they are not different'. In my opinion a SEN results in different abilities and challenges; and hence may remain different from what is considered 'normal'. CWSN and CWOSN both need to be made aware of the difference; and be equipped to deal with it – this needs an attitudinal shift on the part of teachers. Norwich (2002), on a similar note, states that to accommodate diversity, individuality is essential; and the difficult task is to avoid splitting concepts of additionality and inclusivity. Training of teachers also has an influence on their attitudes. Findings reveal multiple implications of the word 'awareness' – awareness of SEN, of strategies used in the classroom to be inclusive, of being aware of 'bright kids' but not being able to address their need, that social inclusion too needs to be addressed separately and of the need to create awareness in the community and society. A review of literature reveals that topics central to inclusion such as inclusive education, inclusive approaches, SEN and classroom behaviour management are not widely covered topic in the B.Ed. courses in India (Section 2.3, 2.4 and 4.3.5). Johansson *et al*., (2021) report that while the national policies and programs have progressed to include IE; these have not translated to changes in teacher training programs towards handling diversity in classrooms. MPES had a brief orientation session for new teachers, and the expectation was that they learn as they teach. Continued professional development is a key area that can be given more impetus in MPES, and is discussed in Chapter 11. Several authors (McLeskey and Waldron, 2015; Sharma and Jacobs, 2016; Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011) suggest that school-based professional development focusing on data-based-intervention; evidence-based practice and teacher's craft knowledge are important in the development of an inclusive school culture.

10.5.3 Collaboration and shared responsibility

MPES had different teams – mainstream-teachers, coordinators, HODs, and SpEd team; with division of work and responsibilities among them. A multitude of factors such as sharing of experiences and strategies; what worked and did not and sharing responsibilities contribute to the effectiveness of an inclusive school. Teachers mentioned the role of guidance and counselling played by the SpEd team. The reliance on the SpEd team decreased from primary-school to high-school. This could be attributed to several factors including the fact that Class-9 onwards the NIOS section was a different classroom and CWSN with more severe difficulties were part of this classroom. Findings reveal that the SpEd team was in the main-classroom primarily for observation of CWSN. In a similar finding Lemons *et al*., (2018) report that the role of the SpEd team was limited to providing accommodation, pull-out room, assessment of SEN and occasionally to help generalize learning from pull-out room. At MPES, due to the MoI followed, CWSN spent time in the main-classrooms too; and teachers did mention classroom strategies as an area of professional development. Teachers also said that the SpEd team had more training, knowledge and skills to interact with CWSN. In my opinion, the role of the SpEd team can be extended beyond observation and working with CWSN in the pull-out rooms. An exchange of ideas and strategies between the SpEd team and main-stream teachers will help both teams. The strategies used in the pull-out rooms can be used in the main-classrooms; and curriculum being covered, core concepts to be learnt by children can be taken as minimum learning levels for children in pull-out rooms. This will also lead to CWSN being seen as the responsibility of both mainstream-teachers and SpEd team.

Some teachers in this study mentioned that they asked CWSN simple questions, or ‘went down to their level and asked questions’; while special-educators mentioned that when the common instruction is adjusted, and accommodations are made CWSN can answer well. In an interesting observation, DeMatthews *et al*., (2020) state that collaborative teaching brings about the realization in mainstream-teachers that all children belong to the main-classrooms and will demonstrate learning at their level. Reindal (2016) highlights the importance of inclusion of all students as part of the class-teachers’ responsibility too, failing which it might lead to marginalization within the school. Ainscow and Sandill (2010) succinctly state that much of what teachers do in their classes is ‘carried out at an automatic, intuitive level, involving the use of their tacit knowledge’; and that observing each other’s classes and sharing experiences helps in clarifying thought processes. Of course, such processes are not easy to introduce and the principal’s role in providing such leadership is very crucial. As is to be expected in most schools, the levels of interaction between the mainstream-teachers and SpEd team varied. While the general impression was that teachers between the two teams did interact and clarify doubts and occasionally exchange strategies; active collaboration was mentioned by only a few teachers. The interactions between the two teams were responses to situations that arose; instances of proactive behaviour management, or demonstrating skills learnt in pull-out rooms (such as reading a lesson) in the main-classroom were not observed. Lemons *et al*., (2018) suggest that integrating data-driven experimentation into the consultation role of the special-educator will improve outcomes and clarify the special-educator’s role. MPES will benefit from improved planning between the different teams using strategies such as differentiating instruction, curricular adaptations and modifications, flexible grouping, peer learning along with progress monitoring to support instructional decision-making and behaviour management strategies. MPES will also benefit from building the professional capacity of teachers by providing opportunities for teachers and leaders to learn together and creating communities to support adult learning (DeMatthews *et al*., 2020). McMahon *et al*., (2016) assert that organizational inclusion that focuses on continued professional development and shared communication between teachers leads to improved teacher attitudes and training which results in improved social and academic outcomes. Thus, the senior management and some teachers conveyed a culture that valued and accepted all students; encouraged sharing of ideas; and achievement of all learners. Some instances of positive attitude and inclusive approaches were observed; these when shared with the teacher community as ‘an approach that has worked in their own school' will bring more teachers into being more inclusive in their approach. MPES will benefit from investing into an approach that actively collaborates and encourages shared responsibility amongst its teachers.

10.6 Leadership

An inclusive school demands leadership with a strong vision, ability to transfer vision into practice, set direction and have a strong shared commitment towards core values. One of the aims of the study was to evaluate the role and structure of leadership that contributed to its commitment to inclusion.

10.6.1 People responsible for inclusion

As explained in the previous section on culture, the principal and vice-principals were firmly committed to inclusion; most coordinators and some teachers also shared that vision. The vice-principals iterated that unless a teacher feels she is a leader and feels trusted, she would not be effective. McLeskey and Waldron (2015) assert that trust in teachers is essential in building a shared vision and commitment to inclusion. Concurring with this thought Uma said that it was her responsibility to bring about a change in her attitude to work with diverse learners. Counsellor Ruhi said 'when I appear confident, I am accepted' – these are examples of transformational leadership. While Priya said that she looked for solutions to include a child who was aloof; (Vignette-9#2, Section 9.1.1) some teachers expressed helplessness in dealing with behavioural issues (Vignettes-7#5, Section 7.2.1). Miskolci *et al*., (2016) state that when there is a difference in opinion between the vision of the school amongst members or unpreparedness or negative attitudes of teachers towards inclusion; distributed leadership may place undue responsibility and stress on the teachers. At such times, direction from the senior leaders and revisiting the commitment to core values is necessary to ensure that the goal of inclusion is met. In all my interactions with teachers and coordinators, the commitment of the principal and vice-principals to inclusion and the several ways in which it was transferred into practice such as delegating responsibilities, setting direction, valuing all teachers and children, providing opportunities for professional development and emphasising on achievement and participation of all children was a recurring theme. Specifically, every teacher who was interviewed said that the principal was unwavering in her commitment to inclusion. In a similar finding, McLeskey and Waldron (2015) state that inclusive school principals are seen as 'adamant and uncompromising' about core values that included inclusion of all children. On similar lines Jha (2010) acknowledge the importance of a school leader and her / his role and vision in responding to the needs of CWSN needs in an inclusive system.

The principal shared the importance of parents advocating for their children; and teachers rightly said that parents have a prominent role in the process of conclusion. However, I was not able to meet any parent. CW&WOSN have an influential role in the process of inclusion. Soulis *et al.*, (2016) concur that inclusion can be effective only when CWOSN accept their peers with disabilities, and is facilitated or hindered according to the positive or negative attitude of CWOSN towards their peers with disabilities. Teachers tried various strategies to empower children and make them aware of their responsibilities and accountability such as sensitizing the class on diversity, counselling CWSN on how to handle situations and having a dialogue with CW&WOSN on behaviour management as demonstrated in Vignette-9#3 (Section 9.1.3). Some teachers displayed sensitivity while talking to CWOSN and in the process ensured that a negative attitude was not conveyed to them about their peers with SEN such as Rani who involved the children of a class in introspecting on disability (Vignette-8#4, Section 8.1.1). The location of the counselling room and pull-out rooms in open and visible spaces in the school building (Vignette-8#5, Section 8.1.1) also demonstrate the positive attitude towards provisions and accommodations adopted by MPES. At the same time, teachers also helped CWSN understand their responsibility such as Mary who helped a CWSN understand his responsibility (Vignette-8#4, Section 8.1.1) and Flower who praised the efforts of a CWSN to participate (Vignette-8#4); thus, demonstrating a positive attitude towards CWSN. Purva lucidly points out that ‘one child (she meant CWSN) cannot change the environment of whole classroom, does it mean that other children (CWOSN) are contributing in their own way?’ Soulis *et al.*, (2016) raise an important issue that the teacher has an important role in ensuring that they convey the right attitude and ensure that they do not portray a negative picture of CWSN when they give support and feedback to CWSN. Student leaders displayed leadership skills and the importance of understanding their friends with SEN, while recognising that their friends with SEN too had to stand up for their rights (Vignette-9#4, Section 9.1.3). Student leaders at MPES were confident that their friends with SEN had abilities and given the right opportunities they would flourish. This finding was in a different vein from the one in Soulis *et al.*, (2016) who report that CWOSN were uncertain about the abilities and potential of CWSN. In an inclusive school system, the vision and culture of the school has to be shared by all stakeholders. Children are important people in this process, and hence voices of student leaders are an important feedback mechanism. Some teachers believed in the sphere of influence wielded by student leaders; an area that could be explored by MPES in developing an inclusive culture.

10.6.2 Setting direction and influencing other's thinking, human development and organizational development

Leaders who are seen as people of action is important. For instance, the prefects (Vignette-9#4, Section 9.1.3), and the principal (Section 9.2) – set direction by their actions and approach. Most teachers said that their principal stands firm by inclusion; and that the principal and vice-principals, coordinators and teachers view inclusion as a shared vision. Pat and Mary (Section 9.2.1) are exemplars of teachers demonstrating shared vision, responsibility and accountability. In building an inclusive culture, the leader of the school has to strongly advocate, and model practices that constitute inclusive approaches – as was observed at MPES. At MPES, coordinators and teachers were leaders in their own sphere of influence; and were also aware of situations when they had to escalate an issue to the next higher level. Similarly, most of them said that inclusion was not a choice at MPES, thus highlighting the 'authoritative' voice of the management. Oskarsdottir *et al.*, (2020) assert that school leadership has an impact on the positive outcomes of all students; and definitely raises the achievement of all learners. High-school and middle-school prefects mentioned equal opportunities, that all children would be good and something and the need to convince their friends to not tease CWSN (Vignette-9#4, Section 9.1.3) – these are important social learning processes that have the power to influence thinking and actions of others – which in turn is crucial in developing inclusive practice (Ainscow and Sandill, 2010). In a study conducted in Cyprus, students were successfully used as pupil support assistants in social activities to bridge the gap between CW&WOSN. This also helped in bringing more awareness in CWOSN about difficulties faced by CWSN (Nicolaidou *et al.*, 2006). At MPES too, the efforts of high-school prefects in conducting an informal survey with their friends with SEN can be guided into developing student support assistants that may eventually lead to a self-supporting team among students. Such social processes can form common agenda that can guide discussions and practice. Indeed, leadership is defined as a process of providing direction and applying influence (Oskarsdottir *et al.*, 2020).

The principal set direction in building a school culture that encouraged inclusion and achievement of all learners; and emphasizing competencies of all children. When the school decided to increase the intake of CWSN the principal arranged for the training of several staff members - human resource development is an important aspect of leadership. Continuous and ongoing professional development, engaging in dialogues and sharing experiences is another important aspect of human resource development - an area that needs to be developed aggressively at MPES. The principal is also dedicated to organizational development that includes partnerships with parents, and addressing areas such as curriculum and assessments. These 3 core functions (setting direction, human development and organizational development) are important aspects of inclusive school leadership (Oskarsdottir *et al*., 2020). Jha (2010) reports from his study on three schools in Delhi that shaping the functioning of special education in all the three schools was the influence of leadership. In Gyan Vihar and Plainfield schools the functioning of the SpEd unit was delegated completely to the SpEd head, and might have probably contributed to the divide between the main school and SpEd setting. However, the St. Cross, the role and visions of the principal was prominent, which was also demonstrated by her interest in the subject of IE.

10.6.3 Dynamic Styles of leadership at different levels

Leaders at various levels displayed different styles of leadership - transformational, distributed and authoritative. The principal arranged for a 6-month orientation on inclusive practices thus displaying transformational leadership; as mentioned by several teachers she delegated responsibility and gave teachers the freedom to plan and implement thus displaying distributed relationship; the teachers had strict guidelines that children should not be pulled-out for any activity class, and that all children should be part of theater and sports – which are signs of instructional leadership. Similarly, coordinators and teachers mentioned that they were aware of their roles and responsibilities, and when it had to be escalated to the next person in the hierarchy thus displaying respect for their own distributed leadership and the need to believe in the organizational hierarchy and instructional leadership. Instances of teachers delegating responsibility to another teacher (mainstream-teacher to special-educator; teacher to coordinator) was also observed. The ability to transfer power to the next in command is important in maintaining an inclusive culture. Solberg *et al*., (2020) raise an important point that while school leaders are responsible for creating an inclusive culture, it’s the class-teachers who are directly responsible for including all children, and hence need the discretion and powers to use interventions. This was observed in my study as well where some teachers said that they use lunchtime, zero period and are at their desk when children come to school in the morning - these they said allows them to talk to children in a more relaxed way. This is distributed leadership with responsibility distributed across levels in formal and informal positions (Solberg *et al*., 2020). Uma, displayed high levels of self-efficacy and said 'you can't change everybody, but you can change yourself' (Vignette-9#2, Section 9.1.1); Heena acknowledges that the diversity in the class has made her a better teacher (Vignette-8#6, Section 8.3) and Gina who said that she views getting CWSN to settle down in class as an interesting challenge (Vignette-8#6) – such teachers are exemplars of transformational leadership. According to SISL (Oskarsdottir *et al*., 2020), inclusive school leaders and leadership teams combine elements of these three types of leadership to achieve the best possible outcomes.

10.6.4 Communication

Findings reveal that across leadership positions, communication lines were open; and that the opinions of teachers and coordinators were sought for taking decisions. All coordinators mentioned fortnightly meetings with the vice-principal where they raised matters such as curriculum, delays in planned schedules and any difficult behaviour issues. DeMatthews *et al*., (2020) indicate that regular monitoring of curricular, instructional and assessment programs are an important aspect of providing high-quality learning experience for students, which is an important role of leaders. All teachers mentioned in the interviews that coordinators, vice-principals and principal were always available for discussions. In my observations at MPES, it was common to see two teachers standing in the corridor and discussing about an incident they faced in class; the coordinators, vice-principals and principal also enquired about matters that had been brought to their attention when they met teachers in their daily interactions. In my opinion, these are instances of positive relationship building that encourage and support the school community. According to Osiname (2018), collaboration and communication are important elements of an inclusive school culture, and that through a myriad of daily interactions, careful reflections and conscious efforts, school leaders can shape positive school cultures. The principals in Osiname's (2018) study contended that strong, positive school cultures do not just happen but are built and shaped by the formal and informal leaders who encourage and reinforce values and traditions. In my opinion, both formal meeting and informal interactions are instrumental in encouraging a positive and open school culture. In this context, a written policy that focuses on processes such as assessment procedures, referrals to the SpEd department, accommodations given to children (maybe in the form of case studies) would help improve the dissemination of this information in all teachers. This policy can be a working document and teacher's manual that also includes documents such as an effective lesson plan, a differential question paper and an IEP. Documentation of processes and systems may also help in maintaining uniformity and consistency across the school. Summarizing, leadership at MPES was a combination of authoritative, transformational and distributed styles. It was observed that the principal, vice-principals and coordinators delegated responsibility; and teachers too agreed that they were given freedom to implement in their sphere of influence; with the tacit understanding that inclusion was a shared commitment. The principal and vice-principals were known to set direction; and the principal fostered human and organizational development. Student leaders had strong positive opinions on inclusion; but their role as leaders was limited – an area that can be strengthened at MPES.

10.7 Chapter summary

In its commitment to inclusion, MPES followed a MoI consisting of main-classrooms and pull-out rooms. Teachers tended to use child-centric disability labels that tended to focus on the SEN of the child. The principal, vice-principals, coordinators and some teachers shared the core values of inclusion that included participation, achievement and social inclusion of all children. These three indicators of inclusion were found to vary across situations and contexts at MPES. The influence of context is also long established in research studies in India given aspects such as urban and rural divide (Johansson *et al*., 2021; Rose *et al*., 2021; Singal 2006a). At MPES an urban school most teachers understood that inclusion was a commitment, some teachers took proactive steps to implement it. There are provisions such as continuum of services, accommodations for assessments, a few training sessions for teachers, and processes for identification of SEN. MPES will benefit from continuous professional development for its teachers, mapping practice to theory, better collaboration and shared responsibility amongst its teams. Globally and in India, research has stressed on the importance of both in-service and pre-service teacher education (Shah *et al*., 2016; Sharma and Jacobs, 2016) and increased interactions between mainstream-teachers and SpEd team (Hornby, 2015); Lemons *et al*., (2018)). The extant assessments at MPES can be structured better to move towards data-based-intervention system. Leadership styles that included authoritative, transformational and distributed contributed to the strong positive culture at MPES, where many teachers valued diversity. Thus, various aspects at MPES such as the focus on empowering different members in the staff, professional development of teachers, school and classroom practices and active presence of senior leaders at MPES, reflect the main organizational functions for effective operation of inclusive schools (Oskarsdottir *et al*., 2020).

Chapter 11: Conclusion

11.1 Synopsis of the study and contribution to knowledge

This qualitative case study was conducted at MPES, an urban private school in Bengaluru, India. The main aims of this study were to investigate the description of inclusion and SEN at MPES; the MoI followed and provision made to include all learners; and to determine the influential stakeholders and their contribution in developing IE practice. Findings reveals that MPES follows a multilevel MoI with main-classrooms and pull-out rooms thus ensuring a continuum of services (Diagram 6.1 and 6.2, Section 6.1). There was an 'inclusion is not an option' view held by the principal, vice-principals, most coordinators and some teachers. However, they also expressed the opinion that with some SEN such as severe learning or behaviour difficulties, pull-out rooms were a necessary provision. Hence, pulling-out children from the main-classroom to address their needs, meant being excluded from the class for that period; this, it was felt was important to ensure that they were included better in the classroom during other parts of the day. This reiterates the idea that inclusion and exclusion co-exist. Teachers at MPES used labels and terms such as 'hyper child', 'slow child' and 'autistic', most of them in an uninformed way or in other words were not basing this labelling on a formal diagnosis of disability. These labels were focused on the SEN ***of*** the child rather than conveying the needs of the child. These were evident from statements such as 'slow learners' for children who learnt slower or progressed slower than the rest of the class, 'LD child' for a child who had difficulty with learning and 'behaviour child' for a child who displayed inappropriate behaviour. From the teachers' point of view, it was essential to assess the child in order to make provisions for the child and to help them plan; thus, the designation of a label enabled the planning and allocation of resources. This highlights the need for a positive system of labelling, and is a specific recommendation that may be implemented at MPES and other Indian school settings (Section 11.3.1).

The move towards a more inclusive education system in India is still seen as presenting major challenges. Advances in understanding inclusion and SEN, provisions and accommodations for implementing inclusion and aspects of leadership as discussed in this thesis might contribute towards addressing these challenges. The school valued achievement of all learners, and paid attention to social outcomes too as expressed by teachers' and students' statements on their sense of belonging, and in ensuring that all children participated in the class and in extra-curricular activities. Some teachers noticed the incremental achievement of CWSN, however it was accompanied with a lowering of expectations. This reflects also on an educational system where expected academic outcomes for children are based on age and not as a function of their capabilities and their functioning abilities. This also indicates at the need to focus on processes that allow the academic and behavioural gains made in the pull-out rooms to be highlighted in the main-classroom via improved collaboration between the mainstream-teachers and SpEd team. The school has arrived at this multilevel model iteratively. There have been organizational changes and restructuring at all three levels; however, there is scope for more interventional intensity at all levels. In the current model (Diagram 6.1, Section 6.1), there is minimal involvement of the SpEd team in the main-classroom (Level-1); and minimal involvement and awareness of mainstream-teachers in pull-out rooms (Level-2 V1 and Level-3). Bridging this gap could be one of the areas that MPES can focus on to improve the efficiency of the continuum of services. Thus, an important contribution from this research study has been that a multilevel MoI, that has been developed as a dynamic and iterative process has helped in ensuring continuum of services and indicates a genuine intent to include CWSN in academic, and socio-emotional domains. This finding is important since it also reiterates the idea that while there may be differences in culture and context, there can be sharing of knowledge, practices and processes between different countries.

A number of provisions of the school such as common extra-curricular activities; emphasis on admission of CWSN; identification and assessment of SEN and processes of recommending children to pull-out rooms help MPES in moving towards its goal of inclusion. While teachers highlighted progress, they also identified barriers to inclusion such as teacher training, resources, organizational changes (such as increased interaction with special-educators, awareness of the role of the SpEd team beyond counselling) and instructional adaptations (such as differentiation). Hence, processes such as differential assessments, better evidence-based feedback for pull-out rooms, inclusive approaches in the main-classrooms such as working on instructional barriers and increased collaboration between mainstream-teachers and Sped team will help provide impetus to the process of inclusion. As has been identified in many schools, MPES has some teachers who are more inclusive in their approach than the others; disseminating their practices amongst other teachers would help in professional development of teachers, and is a specific recommendation for

MPES (Section 11.3.3). A constant reference to the current MoI and changing provisions from a different one in the past; and improved academic and social outcomes by some teachers, coordinators and the senior management indicated an on-going process of inclusion. Evidence collected in my thesis suggests MPES has been dynamic and evolving in its systems and processes with an intent towards being a more effective inclusive school. This is important because it highlights that every school can make changes within its capacities towards including CWSN.

MPES has a robust leadership approach with the principal seen as a person of action, who also demonstrates shared vision and a dynamic working style. Distributed and transformational leadership and some instances of collaborative teamwork contribute to the inclusivity of the school. Some teachers displayed high self-efficacy, devised practices in their teaching to address the diversity in the class and were optimistic - such teachers are leaders and potentially have the power to influence other teachers. The student leaders had strong and positive opinions, their inputs in this process of inclusion might bring in much credibility, because ultimately children are one of the main stakeholders. These multiple approaches towards leadership contribute towards a growing movement of understanding inclusion from India, and might help other schools in moving towards building a shared vision and, an enabling and empowering school culture. The leadership structure at MPES also emphasizes the importance of investing trust, responsibilities and accountability into various stakeholders including the coordinators, teachers and students; and not only the vice-principal and principal. This is a significant contribution in designing the structure of leadership in schools that are moving towards being more inclusive.

11.2 Potential impacts of the study

India is a country with much diversity and a different system of education from other well-resourced countries. Inclusion and IE are concepts that have several interpretations and are implemented in different ways around the globe. As has been stated earlier, inclusion is a much-debated topic and there are various approaches and challenges to it. This study contributes to knowledge in inclusive practices from India. It specifically explores the MoI followed by MPES, an urban private school, the advantages and disadvantages of this model, description of SEN and inclusion by teachers, provisions made to include CWSN, evaluation of indicators of inclusion such as achievement and sense of belonging, attitudes of teachers, culture of the school and leadership aspects. Johansson et al., (2021), highlights the lack of literature from India that focuses on ‘actual implementation of inclusive education’. Thus, this study that focuses on the practical aspects of implementing inclusion contributes to the literature from India in this aspect, though it mainly focuses on inclusion of a few categories of CWSN. While this is a specific case study, the nature and type of research conducted elicited qualitative data which provides insights on processes and systems which may be used by other schools in moving towards more inclusive practices. The specific focus of the investigation enabled me to draw conclusions that were not generalisable, but are sufficiently trustworthy to enable discussion with professionals in order to promote change in other similar Indian settings. Bassey (1999) emphasises the value of local based studies, where the findings derived from qualitative data can be regarded as trustworthy in relation to the specific context and used to effect development or change. Studies such as the one reported in this thesis are not numerous and therefore the possibility of developing further local studies, possibly based across a range of Indian States may assist in developing a more complete picture of what could be achieved to develop a more inclusive education system.

Since this research reports a case study that also drew upon a framework that emerged from previously reported studies, some concepts that have been discussed globally are worth mentioning. Loreman’s (2014) paper on the input-processes-output model of measuring inclusion specifically states that the process used in measuring inclusion; and the themes and resources that are identified are important. I concur and opine that the themes identified in this study, after clear consideration to cultural differences, might help other Indian schools in determining their areas of strength and improvement. In the Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002), the dimension of ‘creating inclusive cultures’ is deliberately placed at the base of the triangle, indicating the foundational role of school culture. The study reported in this thesis completely aligns with this concept as school culture including shared vision and responsibility, leadership and collaborative relationships emerged as one of the strongest themes as demonstrated in the discussion chapter (Section 10.6.3). The term ‘barriers to learning and participation’ proposed in the Index (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) instead of SEN is a necessary and progressive step in the development of inclusive practices. However, since the identification of SEN is needed at the systemic level for provisions, a simultaneous systemic change that include a top-down (from policy to implementation) and bottom-up (implementation to policy) approach would be needed to ensure that provision and access for CWSN and their families are not affected by this change in language. In other words, implementing this change in language from SEN to barriers to learning and participation would need developments in thinking and practice at every level from teachers, school management and those responsible for school, state and national policy. In my opinion this will also result in implementing the simple central message of ‘every learner matters and matters equally’ in the UNESCO guide (2017). Inclusive school leadership that comprises of 3 core functions - setting direction, human development and organizational development, were seen at MPES too (Oskarsdottir *et al*., 2020). Literature points to three important features of inclusive school a) value and focus on all children; b) instructional practices, support to teachers, development of resources was important; and 3) attach importance to achievement of all children, and systems to track progress in both academic and social terms (Section 3.3). An analysis of data based on the thematic framework for this study highlighted the importance of listening to students’ voices, continued professional development and ongoing differential assessments in developing inclusive practice frameworks that in turn connect to the features of inclusive schools. And finally, as Loreman (2014) succinctly states, one tool may not be enough to explore the inclusive processes in an inclusive school. In a similar vein, Singal (2019) highlights that researchers in the Southern context have noted the continued over-reliance on toolkits and policies developed in the Northern context, with scant acknowledgment of existing provision (also refer Section 4.1). In this study, contextual and cultural considerations were addressed; and along with experiential insights a thematic framework was arrived at based on three main studies (Section 5.7). This helped in exploring the processes and systems of MPES in its drive towards being inclusive and may be adopted as a guide in other such research projects in the Indian context.

Central to the idea of schools are topics such as academic and social development of children, achievement and learning, teacher attitudes and training and leadership. MPES, as has been explained, has been evaluating its practices and making changes to its processes and systems. In the process of suggesting recommendations based on the context of the school, and India; I opine that ‘borrowing ideas’ from practices that have worked in other parts of the world would help in this process of inclusion, as long as cultural differences are carefully considered. Keeping this in mind, the next sub-section lists some specific recommendations for MPES; and for other schools in moving towards inclusive practices.

11.3 Recommendations

11.3.1 A positive system of labelling

A system of labelling that is factual and not stigmatizing, useful for lesson-planning and interacting with CWSN will help MPES in its commitment towards being more inclusive. Labels that do not have a negative connotation and are neutral would help in ensuring that stigma is not developed. For example, when a child is referred to as a 'slow child' or a 'slow learner'; what stays with teachers is 'slow' as a characteristic of the child. Instead, if teachers use the term 'processing difficulties', it indicates the needs of the child. Additionally, children with the same SEN may have different support needs, while children with different SEN may have the same support need. For example, a child diagnosed with ADHD may not always be hyperactive; there are some whose distraction is more than their hyperactivity. Similarly, when children do not read – it need not always be due to a difficulty in reading, it could be due to ADHD or something in the environment. The strategies used would be different in these cases; hence it would be better to state the needs of the child, and if required the diagnosis. MPES would benefit from a system of labelling that indicates the need and not just attach a label. However, labels and a formal diagnosis are necessary for availing provisions at the formal level where a CWSN has to attempt examinations conducted by the boards of education. An example of a system of labelling in the form of a learning support framework proposed by the Belgian Ministry of Education (Lebeer et al., 2010, p.380) is shown in Appendix-10. This matrix is based on the needed level of curricular adaptation and classroom support; and the child's broad category (cluster) of functional difficulties. As an educator I find that this matrix has elements that indicates the support needed in the classroom and curriculum; the nature of the difficulty that the child has and if needed the actual SEN. This system also incorporates some of the fundamentals of inclusive approaches such as the premise that the learning support needed by a child is not always a function of the SEN, children with different SEN may need similar kinds of support, and children with same SEN may need different levels of support. A system of classification on similar lines that takes into consideration the Indian culture, education policy and systems of the school may be developed.

11.3.2 Continuum of services

MPES has a multilevel MoI in place that has evolved over the last few years to the current model. It also has some strong processes in place. MPES would benefit from strengthening its provisions to include differential assessments, on-going assessments and collaborative teaching. Increased presence of special-educators in main-classrooms, and active involvement with CWOSN will reduce the divide between main-classrooms and pull-out rooms for all (teachers, special-educators and students). Similarly, facilitating mainstream-teachers to observe pull-out rooms would increase awareness of functioning of pull-out rooms and understanding the role of the SpEd team. Two important areas that MPES would benefit from working on are a curriculum that has differentiation built into it and structured monitoring of progress of CWSN in pull-out rooms and the main-classrooms. MPES has an active curriculum department, the members of which are from the mainstream-teachers; this department can include learning support as one of its responsibilities. The learning support needed for children could be incorporated in the lessons and materials including assessments; the inputs for which can come from the SpEd team to build a differentiated curriculum (Avramidis et al., 2002). Participation, achievement and social inclusion of all children, especially CWSN, being prominent indicators of inclusion; places much emphasis on tracking progress in the academic and social domain. This involves developing efficient monitoring systems with inputs from mainstream-teachers and SpEd team. For example: a) most assessments are based on measuring academic achievement based on grade level textbooks. If the SpEd team is involved in the curriculum; then the assessments can be calibrated to include foundational skills and the lessons that are taken up in pull-out rooms; thus, testing them on what they have learnt. b) there are teachers in MPES who mentioned strategies such as role-play, quiz, group project work as strategies; the assessment system should take feedback from these into tracking progress. These would be a step towards data-based-intervention system. c) Finally, increased usage of inclusive approaches such as allotting sufficient time to respond for all children, using data such as the learning style of students to differentiate instruction and assessment, modelling, scaffolded practice, clear and specific instructions, including behaviour management strategies such as (setting context, expectations and goals, classroom rules, increased opportunities to respond) in classrooms to enhance learning.

11.3.3 Continued professional development

MPES would benefit from continued professional development on two fronts: 1) connecting teachers' practices with pedagogy and 2) moving towards shared belief and collective agency based on individual teacher's personal self-efficacy. Schools such as MPES that are taking steps towards being more inclusive might benefit significantly from highlighting the pedagogy or theory associated with teachers' practices. Instances of inclusive practices were shared by teachers in interviews and observed in some classes. In-house workshops that discuss these practices, connect them with theory, and its greater impact on children's learning and inclusivity of the school would be an important part of empowering and encouraging inclusive practices in teachers. These workshops also increase the support networks available to teachers. Periodic workshops that focus on sharing and discussing strategies that have been effective; or a challenge that they have been facing in their class and more importantly connecting it with pedagogy and theory would add to the professional development of teachers. The leadership team can identify teachers who are more likely to anchor this important step of connecting practice to theory. The second recommendation in this area is based on a paper on Appreciative Inquiry (AI) by Lyons et al., (2016). Instances of the appreciative stance taken in a typical AI method that 'every organization has something that is working well' was observed. Strong personal belief was expressed by the principal, vice-principals and some coordinators and teachers; these people demonstrated high levels of efficacy that can be combined and be the starting point for continued positive change. The leadership team should invest into workshops that focus on helping teachers collaborate to collectively work on co-creating a shared vision, goals and beliefs.

11.3.4 Listening to students' voices

Students' voices and active involvement of students is an area that needs impetus in the process of inclusion. In an interesting project conducted in Cyprus, students were supported as researchers to study the challenges in bridging the gap between SEN and non-SEN students (Nicolaidou et al., 2006). Very few studies involving students' voices have been conducted in India. Singal (2019) emphasises the need to listen to voices of CWSN in mainstream schools and acknowledge their experiences. One of the recent studies conducted in rural Maharashtra, India interviewed children from a marginalized community to gain insights into educational opportunities provided for first generation learners (Malkani, 2017). At MPES, high-school prefects had mentioned that they spoke to their younger peers with and without SEN on the topic of inclusion. In India, high-school students take up projects in humanities. A study on similar lines that employs students as researchers and participants with the intent of enhancing inclusion in MPES could be taken up as an action-research project. The findings and recommendations can be implemented, and the subsequent year another group of students could continue to work on it as an iterative process.

Student mentors and representatives of CWSN in the student leadership team are some steps that MPES could take to ensure that their unique insights and perspectives can inform implementation.

11.4 Reflections, strengths and limitations of the research project

This case study yielded rich qualitative data. The data collection instruments used helped in verification of data; for example, narratives of teachers revealed their lived-in experiences; some of which were observed in classrooms in the observation sessions. The case study is set in a specific context and cannot be generalized, however, inferences can be drawn and applied in other similar contexts. Inclusion in this study is limited to inclusion of CWSN and in that sense is narrow. Accessing parents' voices was beyond the remit and therefore absent from this study, and that is a limitation that could be addressed as a follow-up. Since this was a case study, I had to approach the participants through a few teachers assigned to me, or in other words, gate-keepers with whom a mutual trust had been built carefully and cautiously; directly approaching the parents might have adversely affected this mutual trust. This study has some data collected from children, both W&WOSN; however, more detailed data on the lines of a small case study of a child would have helped in highlighting students' voices and perspectives. Similarly, questionnaires with a focus on aspects of social inclusion such as sense of belonging, peer interaction and academic standing could have helped in collecting data from older students. One-on-one interviews were planned with children; however, all children came to me in groups of 2 or 3. In hindsight, based on the rich data that I collected, these group interviews were probably more effective. Rich data from teachers' interviews highlighted some teachers who were using more inclusive strategies than some others. A nested single-person case study each, of a teacher who used inclusive method and a teacher who said she was not sure of how to teach CWSN, would have further strengthened the results and recommendations of this study.

This study was conducted in an urban private school. Several sections and aspects of this study such as the thematic framework, the model of inclusion, provisions such as a well-staffed special education team and leadership structure could be used and adapted by other similar schools that are moving towards developing inclusive practices. It is important to highlight that the management, structure, leadership, systems and processes, and resources including teacher and teacher training in government schools and aided schools are very different from private schools and therefore there would have to be some adaptation of the methods used in this study. Similarly, the context in rural schools is different from urban schools. For example, teaching in local languages (such as Kannada in Karnataka State) rather than through the medium of English, is more common in rural districts. Hence, while the methods deployed and research questions asked would have currency in schools similar to that in the research here reported, there are limitations on the generalization of this study to these contexts.

The thematic framework and codes generated in this study are theory and data driven. These codes could be applied to a similar study in a similar context, and feedback from such studies used to further develop and refine the themes and codes. This would increase the validity of the thematic framework.

This study re-emphasised my belief that even when teachers carry the view that they were not trained for inclusion or share that they were not adopting an inclusive approach; a teacher who is aware and sensitive to the diverse needs of her class will incorporate inclusive practices in her teaching, quite often without being aware of it. Hence, every school would probably be inclusive to some extent depending on the percentage of such teachers. The research reported in this thesis intends to be a good resource for practitioners and decision-makers in schools in the context of moving towards inclusive practices. The emphasis in this study on the meaning of inclusion and SEN, provisions for implementing inclusion and emphasis on leadership and decision-makers would help in capacity building for schools to be more inclusive. Concluding this piece of research, I intend to apply what I learnt in my capacity as an educator in the following ways:

1) Supporting MPES in converting the recommendations (Section 11.3) to practice by conducting workshops for teachers; observing classes periodically and consulting with teachers and coordinators; and conceptualizing projects for high-school and middle-school students in order to gain insights from CW&WOSN about their learning and socio-emotional development.

2) At KET (where I work) we conduct training workshops for mainstream-teachers and special-educators on inclusive pedagogy and special education; and consult with mainstream schools in moving towards inclusive practices, identifying and framing a remedial program for CWSN and training teachers. The practical learning from this study will be useful in highlighting and applying

theory to practice, to support and empower teachers; and in highlighting the importance of inclusive education processes in schools.

3) Bengaluru has many undergraduate and postgraduate courses that have started to offer inclusive education as a module as part of a subject. The NEP (2020) prioritizes this area; using this research as a case study tool may help in disseminating the idea that inclusion is a concept that can be implemented in Indian schools too; in depicting the dynamic and evolving nature of inclusion and to bring about the much-needed awareness that all schools can become more inclusive from what they are.

Thus, this qualitative case study contributes to the growing body of research from India by reporting on the implementation aspects of MPES, an urban private school in Bengaluru. Learning from the findings of the study such as the MoI, provisions of the school and leadership structure and practices of the school may be useful to other Indian schools in their commitment to inclusion. The specific recommendations for MPES such as continuum of services, listening to students' voices, the need for continued professional development, and a system of labelling that is factual and not stigmatizing are useful guidelines for other Indian schools as well in ensuring that all children are included.

xxxxxxxxxxx

Appendix-1-Questionnaire

Brief to participant

I, Rajani Padmanabhan, am a research student with The University of Northampton, United Kingdom. The title of my research is: A case study investigation of a mainstream school that supports inclusion of students with Special Education Needs in Bengaluru, South India. This study aims to understand the model of inclusion followed in your school. Teachers are at the forefront in the inclusive education system.

The purpose of this survey is to collect information from teachers about their training, their observations and some detail on teaching practices related to inclusion. Please note that your inputs provide important understanding and critical data for this study. This questionnaire will only take 15 to 20 minutes of your time.

Thank you for filling in this questionnaire! If you have any clarifications please contact me on 9999999999 or xxxxxxxx@xxx.com

Yours sincerely,

Rajani Padmanabhan

Instructions:

1) **Please sign the consent form on page 4 after reading the ethical guidelines on page 2 and 3.**
2) **Please fill in the questionnaire on page 5 and 6.**

A case study investigation of a mainstream school that supports inclusion of students with Special Education Needs in Bengaluru, South India

This research is being conducted by Rajani Padmanabhan.

Ethical Statement

The work is being conducted within an ethical code of practice informed by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) Ethical Guidelines 2011 available from www.bera.ac.uk/system/files/3/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-2011.pdf and approved by the School of Education Research and Consultancy Committee (SERCC) at the University of Northampton. Quality assurance will be provided by Richard Rose and through the School of Education Research and Consultancy Committee (SERCC).

Ethical Code

The researcher recognises the rights of all professional colleagues, governors, parents/carers and students who participate in the research to have their confidentiality protected at all times.

Voluntary informed consent will be sought before any questionnaire / interviews are conducted with any respondent as part of the research process. In the case of school students this consent will be sought through schools and obtained in writing before any direct contact is made with the student. Parents and carers have the right to refuse participation and will not be pressured or coerced into taking part in the research.

Participants in the research have a right to withdraw from the process at any time and will be informed of this right.

The researchers will work in accordance with Articles 3 and 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and will ensure that the best interest of children is served at all times. Pupils will be facilitated to give informed consent and this will be in addition to the consent given by parents or carers.

The researchers are under an obligation to describe accurately, truthfully and fairly any information obtained during the course of the research.

There is an obligation to incorporate accurately data collected during the course of this research into the text of any report or other publication related to the research, and to ensure that individual opinions and perceptions are not misrepresented

The researchers will protect the sources of information gathered from questionnaires, interviews, observations and other data collection methods.

The researchers will communicate to the research community the extent to which their data collection and analysis techniques and the inferences drawn from these are reliable, valid and generalisable.

Data collected as part of the research process will be securely maintained and will be accessible only to the researchers engaged in this project.

The researchers have an obligation to report truthfully the findings of the research in any written or verbal report.

The researchers will report the procedures, results and analysis of the research accurately, and in sufficient detail to allow all interested parties to understand and interpret them.

The researchers will make themselves available to discuss the procedures, conduct, or findings of the research with any party involved in the research process.

A research report will be produced and will be made available in both paper and electronic format to the coordinators and Principal of participating schools on completion of the project. This report will be the property of the University of Northampton.

Data collected during the course of the research project which names individuals or institutions will be available only to the researchers and will be made secure both during and after the term of the project.

The researchers are obliged to communicate the findings of their research to other members of the educational research community through research seminars, conference presentation and proceedings and publication taking account of all issues of confidentiality and protection of research participants.

The researchers assert their right to participate in any publication of the research findings in academic journals or other media, which may ensue from the research.

Once agreed, no part of this ethical statement may be changed or modified without justification and recourse to discussion with all interested parties.

Consent Letter for Questionnaire

I, _________________________________, give my consent to Rajani Padmanabhan for collecting my feedback through questionnaire for her research titled - A case study investigation of a mainstream school that supports inclusion of students with Special Education Needs in Bengaluru, South India.

I have read and understood the ethical consideration note. I am also aware about my rights as a participant and feel comfortable to share my views for this research.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer all questions. Please write N/A for any question that is not relevant to you.

Q1: What is your experience (in number of years) as a teacher?

a) 0 to 2 years
b) 3 to 7 years
c) 8 to 13 years
d) 14 years and above

Q2: Please provide details of your qualifications pertaining to teaching.

____

____

____

Q3: Which of the following positions have you held in a school during your teaching career? Please tick all that apply.

a) Class-teacher
b) Subject-teacher
   If yes please specify subjects
c) Special educator
d) Any other position such as coordinator, part of the curriculum design team – please specify.

____

____

____

____

Q4: What is your level of awareness of children with special educational needs in your classroom?

a) I am aware of them in the classroom, and address their needs
b) I do recognize that there are children with special education needs, but I don’t know how to address their needs
c) I find it difficult to differentiate between children who have difficulties and those who are not performing well for other reasons
d) No, I do not think there are children with special educational needs in my class
e) Any other comment related to your answer

____

____

____

____

Q5: a) what types of special education needs have you observed in the classroom?

b) As a teacher, what are the strategies and methods you use in order to ensure that all students can participate and learn?

Q6: Do you have special-educators in your school?

a) Yes
b) No

Q7: What role do special-educators play in your school?

Q8: Based on your experience and knowledge, what is your opinion on including children with special educational needs?

e) Have them in the classroom with an additional teacher or a special educator
f) Pull them out for remedial classes in a resource-room
g) Have children with special education needs in a different classroom
h) Other approaches – please specify

Q9: Has the school provided workshops related to the education of children with special education needs?

a) Yes

b) No

Q10: Have you attended any of these? If yes, please specify the focus of the workshops.

____

____

____

Q10: Would you be willing to participate in an interview on this topic?

a) Yes
b) No

Q11: Please mention your email id and / or contact number

____-

____

Appendix-2-Observation

Class I G - Observation

1. How is mainstream schools defining inclusive education?
2. What provision is the school making to include children with SEN in learning?
3. Who are the influential individuals in decision making and practice in developing inclusive education in this school?

Observation Schedule: (general)

Note the following:
Physical setting – seating, position of bags, furniture
Teachers and their positions and movements
Blackboard activity
Formal and informal break times
Activity and noise levels in class
Attention to details such as language, activities, strategies (don’t think, just record)
Any display of emotion and feelings by teachers and children

Observation of Class 1-G

Period 1

Every child's bag is hung in an accessible position

Children have their pencil box

Teacher uses strategy to quieten the class - are we ready in a sing song voice with hands up straight. Children respond yes, yes, yes

All children go to sports class

Period 2

Instructions are very clear with demonstrations - underline, spellings of difficult words are given. how many times word has to be written, folding the paper to get a magic line,

didn’t fill up the entire board at a stretch.. Took pauses.. Walked around the class

Children are given the liberty to walk up to the board to clarify doubts, check what is written on the board, to borrow stationery

Period 3

Has trapezium shaped tables. This was convenient to sit and work – general comment

kept calling out to children whom she probably knew were SEN or at risk. there were children who did not write much, at least three were very noticeable. The teacher periodically called out to them. These were also seated at a table where others helped them.

takes every teacher an average of 7 to 10 minutes to get started – general comment

Recall the lesson as she wrote keywords. Summer - this season is very hot. Cotton - we wear cotton clothes in summer.

Child Z and two other kids was asked to write the keyword once, while the rest of the class wrote it twice. Child Z did not write the Q n A.

Q n A, some kids didn't finish. They were on the board for a long time. Many kids were seen copying at a pace comfortable for them.

Period 4

English teacher discouraged children walking up to the board. Only one child was allowed to walk.

Period 5

Math teacher wrote a set of Math rules on the board. For example : When zero is added to a number, the answer is the same number. After writing this she gave instructions as to what word to underline.

there were some children who were constantly wandering in the Math period, more than the other classes.

Appendix-3-Interview-Schedule

Semi-structured interview schedule

On the teacher's work

Lesson plans are given? Curriculum is designed by whom? Is there scope for creativity / flexibility?

Meaning of Inclusion, awareness, classroom strategies

What (according to you) does the term special education needs mean? How do you identify them?

What (according to you) is inclusion?

What (according to you) is achievement in the context of education and school? (ask for examples) How would you measure it?

Is there a connection between achievement and inclusion?

Do you look at strategies that help the whole class? Do you come up with strategies that help these kids specifically? When a strategy doesn't work, what do you do?

From teaching to evaluation – at what stages do children need additional help?

Do teachers collaborate for a particular child or class? Sharing between teachers of a class when they find that something really worked or didn't?

Placement of SEN kids in classroom / in resource-room / separate classroom – which? why?

Role of special-educators in the team; what are your suggestions for them?

When are parents called in for support?

Remedial / enrichment classes?

Social Inclusion

What are your comments on the interaction and social relations between children of a class, their acceptance of peers? Do all get equal opportunities to participate in sports / drama? Have you observed peer support in the class?

Do kids with SEN get influenced by their peers (positive and otherwise) and vice versa?

Children in positions as leaders – how does this happen? Is there any provision to include children with SEN in leadership roles?

Support for teachers, policy related questions

Workshops / seminars / training / guidance – elicit information on this

How does the feedback loop work? When something that they try in class works / or if something doesn't work – who is the contact point for this? (based on teacher's answer and build on)

When there are high concerns about any child what do you do? Or if you feel, you haven't been able to meet the needs of some kids then what do you do?

How often do teachers meet coordinators? (agenda?)

(most schools have assessments, that generally forms the basis to track a child). Besides this are there checklists that are used to keep track of progress of child? Any specific lists for the at-risk child or high-achieving child?

School policy – management / coordinator what is the message from them?

Older classes – accommodations given to the child keeping curriculum and board exam in mind

Therapists – interaction with other stakeholders – who does it? Are recommendations made for therapy?

Appendix-4-Codes

Sl No	Code	Description
1	DSEN	description of SEN by teachers
2	StT	strategies used by teachers
3	StS	strategies used by students
4	CuPr	provisions in curriculum
5	PII	people involved in practicing inclusion
6	ELP	effective leadership by principal
7	CFA	child friendly approach
8	TrPr	provision by school for teachers
9	IE	description of IE by teachers and children; any utterances that indicate absence/presence of IE
10	Collaboration	collaboration between different stakeholders
11	Challenges	challenges faced in practice including in implementation, training etc
12	Placement	views and different options available for children on placement of CWSN such as resource-room, special classes, remedial classes after school; special school
13	Expectations	expectations from teachers of students
14	Achievement	how do teachers define achievement, how is it measured, what is the connection between inclusion and achievement?
15	Inclusion/ Exclusion	Events, statements or strategies that indicate inclusion or exclusion, both in the classroom and in extra-curricular activities, socially
16	Identification	identification of SEN
17	Acceptance	acceptance of CWSN, this includes any statements that talk about teasing too
18	TT	training teachers
19	SEBD class	training children on non-academic content like life skills
20	Counselling	counselling

21	Participation	teachers and students view on participation and provisions for the same; includes statements about sense of belonging too
22	Opportunities	teachers and students view on opportunities for CWSN and provisions for the same.
23	Awareness	teachers and students view on awareness of CWSN and provisions for the same.
24	Conclusion	conclusion
25	Processes	processes
26	Spl	an utterance/event that appeared important but did not fit into the above codes

Appendix-5-Questionnaire-Collated

This appendix contains data collated from questionnaires of Class-1 teachers. The 12 questions in the questionnaire and their responses have been collated.

Sl No	Name	Number of years of experience a) 0 to 2 years b) 3 to 7 years c) 8 to 13 years d) 14 years and above	Qualifications	Position in school a) Class teacher b) Subject teacher If yes please specify subjects c) Special educator d) Any other position		level of awareness in school a=aware and address their needs b=recognize but unsure of how to address c-difficulty in identifying d=no SEN children	special needs observed in classroom	strategies used in classroom	presence of spl educators a = Yes b = No	role of special educators in school
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q3 comment	Q4	Q5a	Q5b	Q6	Q7
1	JJ	a	M Sc Computer Science B.Ed. studying	a, b		a	irrelevant answer	teaching aids activities group discussion real time examples	a	guidance and support making subject easy
2	PS	b	BSc B.Ed. NTT CTET	a, b	Math CCA	a	irrelevant answer	audio visual aids activities group discussion different ways of teaching concepts	a	guidance taking care of SEN kids

3	Purva	d	BSc B.Ed. CIDT	a, b	Math English Math Rep Class I	b	Attention seeking Spatial Autism Behavioral Hyperactive Physical disorder	Respect them for what they are outdoor activities lab activities use words that they understand hands on activities	a	counsel / guide one to one learning coordinate with class and subject teachers and parents
4	KSA	many doubts in responses, ticked between choices etc, hence have not considered it								
5	JN	b	BA	a		b	need help with academics behavioural	hands on activities	a	individual attention help them in all subjects
6	RS	b	PGDCA BSc B.Ed.	b	Computer Science	a	Reading disability Learning Disability	group activities	a	support instruction
7	AN	d	MA B.Ed.	a	school administrator head supervisor	a	Behavioural spellings dyslexia ADHD	differential teaching oral drilling simplified question papers activities	a	life skills counseling coordinate between teachers and children
8	Sheena	b	BA Bed	a		b		showing videos field activities real time examples	a	one to one attention
9	RD	a	NA	a b	English	a	Learning disabilities slow learners behavioural issues	Repetition of topic at least 3 times use objects, examples and actions	a	guide and teach the child

10	VP	a	NTT Montessori pursuing Bed	a b	English	a	Behavioural issues learning disabilities	interactive sessions role play games activities	a	to be with children with behavioural issues use their own methods to calm them in academics use activity based teaching for them
11	SM	c	MA Bed NTTC	a b	English worked in school that children with learning disabilities	a	Vision issue	differential activities and worksheets	a	individual attention interaction with parents
12	MAS	c	BE DCA	a b	English Science Computer Science involved in curriculum planning and execution for English	a	Speech issues Learning gaps Autism Behavioral Vision	differential activities and worksheets fun learning visual learning	a	identifying problem areas cater to child's level of learning take parents cooperation

Sl No	Name	inclusion of SEN kids a=in classroom with spl educator b=resource room c=SEN kids in different classroom d=others		workshops by school a=yes b=no	focus of workshops	interview	contact details 1=email 2=phone number 3=both 4=none		My notes:Do I want to interview (leading to a purposive sample)
		Q8	Q8 comment	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12		
1	JJ	a		a		b	1		
2	PS	a	take the kid out when it becomes disturbing to the rest	a	general	b	1		
3	Purva	b	extra counseling	a	identification of special needs	b	1		
4	KSA								
5	JN	c		a	dyslexia	b	1		yes
6	RS	a		a		a	3		yes, talks about increasing participation
7	AN	a		a		b	1		
8	Sheena	c		a	identification of children with SEN dyslexia	b	1		
9	RD	a		a	how to understand the child with SEN, how to teach and help them	b	1		yes, because of strategies

10	VP	c				b	2		
11	SM	b	a	a	how to handle children with behavioural issues and learning disabilities	a	1		
12	MAS	a b		a	identification of children with SEN	a	2		

Appendix-6-
InterviewTranscript

Ritu
Experience : totally 10 years, 2 years in MPES
Position: Classes- 5,6 and 7 Science teacher, Class-Teacher of 6C

length: 14:18 on 19-09-2019

Qualification: M.Sc. M.Ed.

Impressions: a little hesitant, warmed up after going through the confidentially clause and intent of the study were reiterated

Question	Utterance	Response
I note the response in your questionnaire that says you give different tasks to some children.	1	sometimes children with difficulties, their concentration is not good. So they are disturbing the others too. So we can give them different task like find words and mark. They are different from average children.
do you see a difference between them and the ones who are average functioning?	3	when we are teaching we can ask questions on what is being taught? We can see their response - is he paying attention to the class? is he trying to answer? Or is he trying to divert himself by talking to a friend? so we can make out. If he answers, he was paying attention, he is able to grasp and understanding. he is trying to answer but is not able to answer, he is trying to concentrate but not able to answer, that mean he is putting in effort but not able to answer.
so how do you help the second set of children who are trying to understand?	4	by explaining the same concept again. I call the child separately using different simple methods outside class.
	5	audio visual aids. Or some other tools
	6	mind-maps diagrams all these I use. One word flow charts, I ask them to write in text only. I also ask them to draw in rough book. Generally I put the entire lesson in one flow chart, I encourage the children to draw it in their book. This will help in revision.
is this part of notes?	7	no this is my method

What are your views on achievement and expectations of children?	8	they are different for different children. For slow learners it is less. In my class there is one child with less grasping power. I think he goes for remedials. We include him. We ask him to write notes. We also send scanned notes.
any other strategy that works for you?	9	we give few words on board after explaining. We ask them to find these in notes. So that means they have to read their notes. That way they are indirectly revising.
what is your opinion on curriculum?	10	we follow NCERT. But for slow learners it is too vast
do you condense the lesson for them?	11	no, not the lesson. But they get a simple paper. But we tell them what is important in the book.
The children whom you refer to as slow learners, how are their class interactions?	12	the boy in my class, he is disturbing, he hits he takes things. We have to be polite otherwise they don't listen to us. The others have accepted and cooperate. I talk to the other children.
how often do you talk to them?	13	once in 15 days I talk. I tell them we must show care love and affection only then we can help him.
these kids are around 11 or 12 years, do they understand?	14	few understand. One child K, he takes care of him very well. He keeps telling the other one not to like that. Our principal mam she came to my class and addressed the class.
you requested her to come?	15	no, she came by herself
do they miss activity class?	16	no they are for all activities, sometimes they miss zero period
have you seen such children in your earlier school?	17	no
Lets says we have class that does not have slow learners..	18	I would say it is definitely easier in the class. Here we have to put more effort. But I am really happy to have this challenge. It's a good experience
what do you keep in mind when you make your lesson plan?	19	for everyone, for bright ones, we get higher order questions. This is my own effort from google or other books.
	20	for notes we refer text books, NCERT books additional books and put it together. Same notes for all. Question paper is based on notes and what is discussed in class. See we have HOTS in class, the bright lot comes up with answers and is discussed in the class.
	21	After every test, the paper is discussed in the class.

Appendix-7-Observation-Coded

Class I G - Observation

Observation	RQ	Code
Every child's bag is hung in an accessible position	RQ2	CFA
Children have their pencil box	RQ2	CFA
Teacher uses strategy to quieten the class - are we ready in a sing song voice with hands up straight. Children respond yes, yes, yes	RQ2	StT
All children go to sports class	RQ1	Placement
Instructions are very clear with demonstrations - underline, spellings of difficult words are given. how many times word has to be written, folding the paper to get a magic line,	RQ2	StT
didn’t fill up the entire board at a stretch.. Took pauses.. Walked around the class	RQ2	StT
Children are given the liberty to walk up to the board to clarify doubts, check what is written on the board, to borrow stationery	RQ2	StT
trapezium shaped tables. This was convenient to sit and work	general observation	
kept calling out to children whom she probably knew were SEN or at risk. there were children who did not write much, at least three were very noticeable. The teacher periodically called out to them. These were also seated at a table where others helped them.	RQ1 RQ2 RQ3	Expectation Placement StS PII
takes every teacher an average of 7 to 10 minutes to get started	general observation	
Recall the lesson as she wrote keywords. Summer - this season is very hot. Cotton - we wear cotton clothes in summer.	RQ2	StT

Child Z and two other kids was asked to write the keyword once, while the rest of the class wrote it twice. Child Z did not write the Q n A.	RQ1	Expectation
Q n A, some kids didn’t finish. They were on the board for a long time. Many kids were seen copying at a pace comfortable for them.	RQ2	StT
English teacher discouraged children walking up to the board. Only one child was allowed to walk.	RQ1 RQ2	Expectation
Math teacher wrote a set of Math rules on the board. For example : When zero is added to a number, the answer is the same number. After writing this she gave instructions as to what word to underline.	RQ2	StT
there were some children who were constantly wandering in the Math period, more than the other classes.	RQ1	Inclusion

Appendix-8-RQ1-Interview-Coded

Name of teacher	Response	Code
Priya	based not just on learning… I observe first.. I see some are very quiet.. I need a couple of days because every year it's a new class. The first week is like an ice breaker. Then when I start correcting notebooks I know. Some children speak so well, but their notebooks are not done. there is gap between speaking and writing. (and green) and brown	DSEN Identification
Priya	restlessness.. One child in class 6 is very restless.. Because of him the whole class is disturbed.	DSEN Identification
Priya	I sometime think they (children with discrepancy) should be in main class. But sometimes it doesn't work. In a class of 40 children, even if we get to know there is a child who is different, how do we address it. In 35 to 40 minutes, how do I give special attention to that child, i am not able to. If i go that child, how do i control the others. These days children don't have patience, i have to do so many things in an English class.	Placement
Priya	Though they say these kids must mingle with the rest, I feel they should be in a different class, I would love to teach them I will go down to their level. They will learn much better. In fact learn quite a lot. that why I am saying I am not happy with the way I teach. And that's why I think we should have different classrooms. It is difficult to balance. It's a dilemma	Placement Expectations
Priya	language is so poor, expression is so poor. When I see their writing too I am not happy with it.	DSEN Identification
Priya	maybe yes(achievement is affected). I can speak more in detail about the same thing. Now, I can't go too much in details.	Achievement
Priya	last year when I was CT, one child was excluded. Written English was average or above. But he never spoke. Very very quiet.	Identification
Uma	before I came here, I had no idea of SEN or IE. I just knew then as kids with difficulties. In my first year here I heard the term LD. It was difficult settling in. I got to know that they need that something special. And I realized that I gave them that something special. I don't know what maybe attention?	DSEN IE

Uma	In other schools there would be just 1 or 2 such kids in a class. We would label them "murkha" or dumb. And higher classes that is 8th onwards they would be thrown out. After coming here, the whole things has changed. This is my 3rd year and now I am a totally different person. (very emphatically)	DSEN IE
Uma	One more child would ruffle up the entire class. There was another child who was very allot wouldn't write. Such children(the ones who would ruffle the class) needs a separate classroom, because in a large class I don't have time. But in ECS it is possible.	DSEN Placement
Uma	last year I was of the belief that they should not be separate. But this year there are a couple who lag quite a bit. I can't ask them in regular class because others will laugh at them. They will benefit from small classroom. Like this child who stammers, but he writes. There are others who say but can write.	Placement CFA DSEN
Uma	according to me segregation is not a solution at all. They have to be in a classroom. The class teacher has to be after them. They need to know that they are part of the classroom.	Placement IE
Uma	I am not bothered about Achievement. To each his own. Even if I am questioned I will answer.	Achievement

Appendix-9-Related Terms used in SEN

Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD)

According to Reid et al., (2016) the term Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD) refers to children who experience a range of challenges in one or more of the following area: literacy, numeracy, writing, movement and attention. The labels used for these are dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and ADHD respectively. As the authors rightly point out these difficulties can be seen on a continuum from mild to severe and can co-exist. There has been a significant change in the way learning disorder has been defined in The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) DSM IV-TR and DSM V. A look at both will help us understand the evolving nature of the understanding of learning difficulties (LD). According to the DSM IV-TR, the aptitude-achievement criteria is one of the main criteria in diagnosing a learning disorder. There has to be a significant difference between a child's area of intellectual functioning and overall intelligence as measured by a standard intelligence test like the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (Martin *et al*., 2000). The DSM IV-TR (Katchergin, 2016, p.195) has the following categories under learning disorders: 1. Reading-Disorder 2. Mathematics-Disorder 3. Disorder-of-Written-Expression 4. Non-Specific-Learning-Disorder. According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fifth edition (DSM-5) "SLD is a type of neurodevelopmental disorder that impedes a person's ability to learn and use specific academic skills, such as reading, writing and arithmetic, which serve as the foundation for most other academic learning" (Reid *et al*., 2016). The term Specific Learning Disorder is used, and is divided into 3 sub categories according to DSM-5 (Katchergin, 2016, p.201): 1. Specific-Learning-Disorder-with-Impairment-in-Reading 2. Specific-Learning-Disorder-with-Impairment-in-Written-Expression 3. Specific-Learning-Disorder-with-Impairment-in-Mathematics. The DSM 5 retains the core concept that SLD is a neurodevelopmental disorder, but takes away the aptitude-achievement discrepancy criteria. It however indirectly retains the average intelligence criteria by excluding intellectual disorder (defined as sub-average intelligence, IQ of 70 or below) (Scanlon, 2013). The four diagnostic categories as defined by DSM 5 are (Katchergin, 2016, p.202):

a) Difficulties in learning academic skills and must be manifested as one of the six symptoms (in the areas of reading and reading comprehension, spelling and written expression, or mathematics).

The difficulties should have persisted for at least six months despite focused intervention.

b) These difficulties referred to must be seen in low academic achievement and cause significant impairment in academics and everyday life.
c) The onset age could be in elementary school and may manifest fully later.
d) These difficulties should not attributable to Intellectual Disorder, uncorrected visual or auditory acuity, other mental or neurological disorders, psychosocial adversity, lack of proficiency in the language of academic instruction, or inadequate instruction.

The DSM 5 also specifies that the severity of the disability could be on different levels – moderate, medium and profound.

Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)

According to DSM-IV-TR, individuals must currently have at least six significant symptoms of inattention and/or six symptoms of hyperactivity/impulsivity that have persisted for a minimum of 6 months and are ‘to a degree that is maladaptive and inconsistent with developmental level’. There is a range of criteria (Criteria A to F) that must be met to be diagnosed as ADHD. One interesting characteristic of ADHD from a research perspective is that it creates impairments in cognitive functioning that can be assessed objectively with neuropsychological tests. Research in clinical samples has shown consistently that youth undergoing treatment for ADHD have significant decrements in educational attainment (Adler *et al.*, 2015).

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

The DSM-5 now groups autism disorder, Asperger’s syndrome and pervasive developmental disorder as autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Persistent difficulties in social communication and interaction across multiple contexts; restricted or repetitive behaviour, interest or activities are the main diagnostic criteria for ASD as per DSM 5. The DSM also gives severity levels of 1, 2 and 3 for the criteria. The DSM 5 also indicates that there could be an accompanying intellectual or language impairment (Narzisi *et al.*, 2013). Simply put children with ASD have impairments in the domains of communication, interactions and exhibit repetitive or stereotyped behaviour; with varying severity levels. There is also variation in their cognitive development. Children on the autism spectrum with normal or high IQ are termed as high functioning autism spectrum disorders (HFASD) (Narzisi *et al*., 2013).

Developmental Delays

Children are termed as having developmental delays where there is no formal diagnosis of dyslexia, dyspraxia or ADHD, but are often unhappy, not motivated and gaps are found in learning (Reid *et al*., 2016).

Slow Learners

The main criterion for slow learners is their IQ as measured by standardized tests is low in the range of 70 to 90. Children who are slow learners struggle with academics and its demands and have difficulties with reading, writing and mathematics (Krishnakumar *et al*., 2011).

Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD)

Students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) are described as those who "exhibit difficulty in the effective regulation of their social interactions, behaviour and/or emotional functioning that interferes with the students' own development and/or lives of others" (Leeuw *et al*., 2017, p.2). The behavioural difficulties due to SEBD are seen in two main ways – internalising and externalising. Internalising difficulties may manifest as withdrawal, anxiety and depression; whereas externalising difficulties are aggression, impulsivity and hyperactivity.

Functional Impairment

The DSM 5 recognizes functional impairment as a critical component in diagnosis. The DSM 5 uses the World Health Organization Disability Assessment Schedule (WHODAS 2) to evaluate functional impairment in any condition. The DSM 5 uses the WHODAS 2 as an empirical and normed measure of impairment across disorders. According to the manual for WHODAS (WHODAS, 2010), functional impairment represents one's capacity of lack thereof for meeting the expectations of one's environment: staying out of trouble in school, self-restraint when angry, driving, managing money, exercising, eating well and working to stay in good health, avoiding risk.

Appendix-10-Sample Framework for Labelling

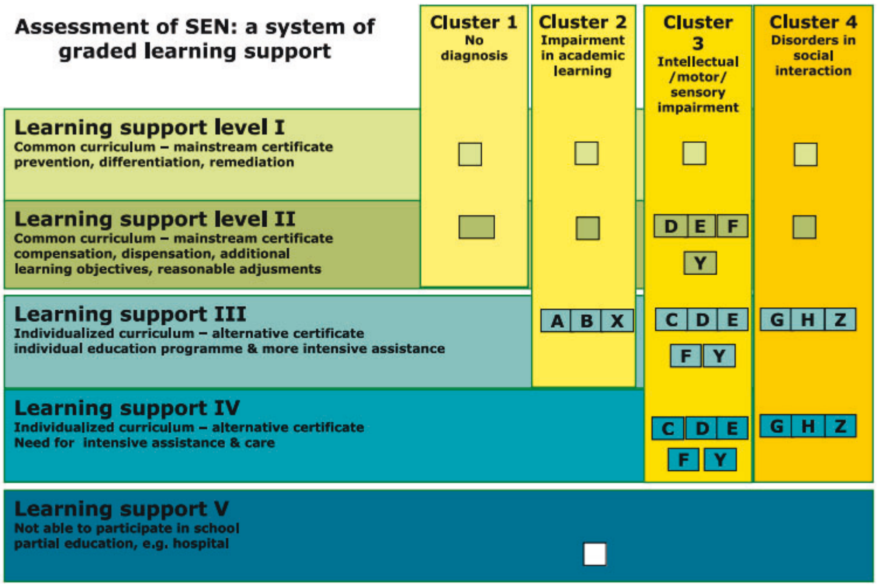

Assessment of SEN: a system of graded learning support
Cluster 1 No diagnosis
Cluster 2 Impairment in academic learning
Cluster 3 Intellectual /motor/ sensory impairment
Cluster 4 Disorders in social interaction
Learning support level I
Common curriculum – mainstream certificate prevention, differentiation, remediation
Learning support level II
Common curriculum – mainstream certificate compensation, dispensation, additional learning objectives, reasonable adjusments
Learning support III
Individualized curriculum – alternative certificate individual education programme & more intensive assistance
Learning support IV
Individualized curriculum – alternative certificate Need for intensive assistance & care
Learning support V
Not able to participate in school partial education, e.g. hospital
D E F
Y
A B X
C D E
F Y
G H Z
C D E
F Y
G H Z

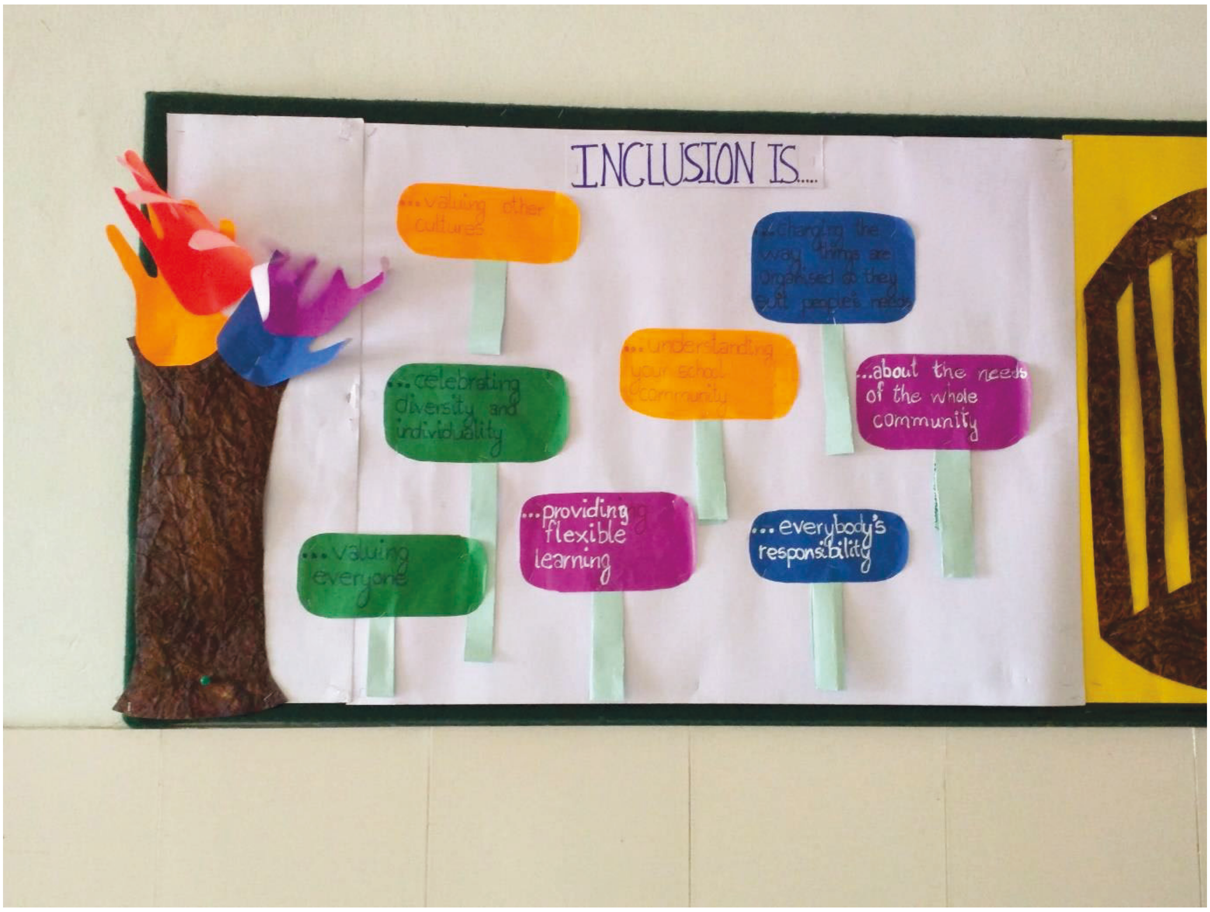
Figure 1. Adapted Learning Support Framework (adapted from Van Rompu et al. 2008). Notes: A: mild intellectual impairment, B: Specific Learning Impairment, C: moderate/serious/profound intellectual impairment D: motor impairment, E: visual impairment, F: hearing and language impairment G: emotional/behavioural disturbance H: pervasive developmental disturbance; X, Y & Z: does not belong to impairment group but to cluster.

- Cluster 2 is for children with participation problems due to impairments mainly manifesting in acquiring academic skills (specific learning impairments such as dyslexia and dyscalculia and/or mild intellectual impairment).
- Cluster 3 are children with participation problems due to functional impairments in acquiring school as well as in a daily life skills (with moderate to severe intellectual, physical or sensory impairment or a combination of those).
- Cluster 4 are children with emotional/behavioural functional disturbances and/or autistic spectrum disorder, including children with a diagnosis of ADHD.

Source: Lebeer et al., (2010), p.380

Appendix-11

Poster of Inclusion in MPES


INCLUSION IS....
...valuing other cultures
...changing the way things are organised so they suit people's needs
...understanding your school community
...celebrating diversity and individuality
...about the needs of the whole community
...providing flexible learning
...everybody's responsibility
...valuing everyone

Appendix–12

Pictures of resource-room and ECS-room

Glossary

B.Ed.	Bachelor in Education An undergraduate degree that is compulsory to become a teacher
Brigance Diagnostic Inventories	Readiness and screening inventory that is used to determine the developmental level of a child below the of 7 years
CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education One of the boards of education in India at the central level
CISCE	Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations One of the boards of education in India at the central level
Class	The word term Class is the equivalent of Grade in many schools in India. Class-1 implies Grade-1.
DI	A pedagogical approach used widely in IE
ECS-class	Extra Curriculum Support class, where children are pulled-out from the main-classroom; there are around 15 children and 1 teacher
GLAD	Grade Level Assessment Device curriculum-based assessment tool that gives information on how much the child deviates from normal and in what specific aspects s/he deviates. It helps in establishing a comprehensive grade level in reading, writing and math.
MoI	Model of inclusion Typically how a school is organized to teach diverse learners
Modified-question-papers	Papers that are differentiated for CWSN
NCTE	National Council for Teacher Education Central institute for teacher training in India
NEP	National Education Policy the most recent legislation in education in India
NIOS	National Institute of Open Schooling One of the boards of education in India at the central level
Pull-out	In some countries it is also referred to as withdrawal; For example, children are pulled-out of main-classroom
Resource-room	Children are pulled-out from the main-classroom; there are around 5 children and 1 teacher

RTE	Right To Education, a legislation that mandated free and compulsory education in India
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan a legislation that mandated education for all
UDL	Universal Design for Learning Pedagogical approaches used widely in IE

References

Adler, L. A., Spencer, T. J. and Wilens, T. E. (2015) *Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in Adults and Children*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ainscow, M. and César, M. (2006) Inclusive education ten years after Salamanca: Setting the agenda. *European Journal of Psychology of Education.* **21**(3), pp.231-238.

Ainscow, M. and Sandill, A. (2010) Developing inclusive education systems: the role of organisational cultures and leadership. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. **14**(4), pp.401-416.

Armstrong, F., Armstrong, D. and Barton, L. (2016) *Inclusive Education: Policy, Contexts and Comparative Perspectives.* London: Routledge.

Artino, A. R., Rochelle, J. Dezee, K., Gehlbach, H. (2014) Developing questionnaires for educational research: *AMEE Guide No. 87*. 36. *Medical Teacher.* **36,** pp.463-474.

Aruna., Singh, K. and Mangi, L. (2016) Inclusive Education in India. *The International Journal of Indian Psycology*. **2**(2), pp.23–30.

Atkins, L., and Wallace, S. (2012) *Qualitative Research.* London: Sage Publications.

Avissar, G. (2012) Inclusive education in Israel from a curriculum perspective: an exploratory study. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. **27**(1), pp.35-49.

Avramidis. E, Bayliss, L. and Burden, R. (2002) Inclusion in action: an in-depth case study of an effective inclusive secondary school in the south-west of England. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. **6**(2), pp.143-163.

Balakrishnan, A., Kulkarni, K., Moirangthem, S., Kumar, C., Math, S., and Balakrishnan, P. (2019) The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016: Mental health implications. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine.* **41**(2), pp.119-125.

Banks, J., Shevlin, M. and McCoy, S. (2012) Disproportionality in special education: identifying children with emotional behavioural difficulties in Irish primary schools. *European Journal of Special Needs Education.* **27**(2), pp.219-235.

Bansal, S. (2016). Teacher education programmes preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms: A North India context. *Journal of Disability Management Rehabilitation.* **2**(2), pp.83–90.

Bansal, S. (2018). Understanding Teachers' Perspective of Inclusive Education for Children With Special Needs (CWSN). *Educational quest.* **9**(1), pp.115–123.

Bhatnagar, N. and Das, A. (2014) Attitudes of secondary school teachers towards inclusive education in New Delhi, India. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*. **14**(4)**,** pp.255–263.

Biestra, G. J. (2015) *Beyond Learning: Democratic Education for a Human Future.* London: Routledge.

Black-Hawkins, K. (2010) The Framework for Participation: a research tool for exploring the relationship between achievement and inclusion in schools. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*. **33**(1), pp.21-40.

Bondie, R.(2019) Demystifying Differentiated Instruction. *Science &Children.* Guest Editorial September, pp.14-19.

Booth, T. and Ainscow, M. (2002) Index for Inclusion – Developing learning and participation in schools. Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education.

Bostrom, P K. (2019). In Search of Themes – Keys to Teaching Qualitative Analaysis in Higher Education. *The Qualitative Report, Teaching and Learning.* **24**(5), pp.1001-1011.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology,* **3**(2), pp. 77-101.

Choudhary, M.C., Jain, A., Chahar, C K. and Singhal, A, K. (2012) A Case Control Study on Specific Learning Disorders in School Going Children in Bikaner City. *Indian Journal of Pediatrics*. **79**(11), pp.1477–1481.

Cohen, L. Manion, K. and Morrison. (2017) *Research Methods in Education*. London and New York: Routledge.

Cranston, N. (2013) School Leaders Leading: Professional Responsibility Not Accountability as the Key Focus. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*. **41**(2), pp.129–142.

Creswell, J. W. (2014) *Research design : qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Sage publications: USA.

Creswell, J. W. (2019) *Educational Research – Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research.* India: Pearson.

Das, A. K., Kuyini, A. B., and Desai, I. P. (2013) Inclusive education in India: Are the teachers prepared? *International Journal of Special Education.* **28**(1), pp.1-10.

DeMatthews, D., Billingsley, B., McLeskey, J. and Sharma, U. (2020) Principal leadership for students with disabilities in effective inclusive schools. *Journal of Educational Administration.* **58**(5), pp.539-554.

Demetriou, K. (2020) Special Educational Needs Categorisation Systems: To Be Labelled or Not? *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*. pp.1-23.

Ethical guidelines for educational research (BERA), 2018. [online] Available from: https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018 Accessed [August 07, 2018].

Farrell, P., Dyson, A., Polat, F., Hutcheson, G. and Gallannaugh, F. (2007) Inclusion and achievement in mainstream schools. *European Journal of Special Needs Education.* **22**(2), pp.131-145.

Fore III, C., Hagan-Burke, S., Burke, M., Boon, R. and Smith, S. (2008) Academic Achievement and Class Placement in High School: Do Students with Learning Disabilities Achieve more in one Class Placement than Another? *Education & Treatment of Children*. **31**(1), pp.55-72.

Florian, L. (2014) 'What counts as evidence of inclusive education?' *European Journal of Special Needs Education.* **29**(3), pp.286-294.

Florian, L. (2019) On the necessary co-existence of special and inclusive education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education.* **23**(7), pp.691-704.

Florian, L. and Black-Hawkins, K. (2011) Exploring inclusive pedagogy. *British Educational Research Journal.* **37**(5), pp.813-828.

Forlin, C. and Chambers, D. (2011) Teacher preparation for inclusive education: increasing knowledge but raising concerns. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*. **39**(1), pp.17-32.

Forlin, C. and Loreman, T. (2014). *Measuring Inclusive Education.* Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited.

Gangopadhyay, K., Jacob, RT. and Jayanth, R. (2020) How Effective is Theory-Based Learning of Ethics in India? *Kozhikode Society & Management Review.* **9**(1), pp.55-61.

Göransson, K. and Nilholm, C. (2014) Conceptual diversities and empirical shortcomings – a critical analysis of research on inclusive education. *European Journal of Special Needs Education* **29**(3), pp.265-280.

Government of Karnataka (GoK) (2019). [online] Available at: https://schooleducation.kar.nic.in/databank/GoKReport1819Final_230919.pdf [Accessed June 10, 2022].

Griful-Freixeneta, J., Struyvena, K., Vantieghema, W. and Gheyssens, E. (2020) Exploring the interrelationship between Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and

Differentiated Instruction (DI): A systematic review. *Educational Research Review.* **29**(2020), pp.1-23.

Hameed, A. and Manzoor, A. (2019). Similar Agenda, Diverse Strategies: A Review of Inclusive Education Reforms in the Subcontinent. *Bulletin of Education and Research*. **41**(2), pp.53-60.

Hodkinson, A. and Devarakonda, C. (2009) Conceptions of inclusion and inclusive education: A critical examination of the perspectives and practices of teachers in India. *Research in Education* **82**, pp.85-99.

Hornby, G. (2015). Inclusive special education: development of a new theory for the education of children with special educational needs and disabilities. *British Educational Research Journal.* **42**(3), pp.234-256.

Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS) (2009). [online]. Available from: https://mhrd.gov.in/iedss [Accessed June 21, 2019].

Jha, M. M. (2010) *From Special to Inclusive Education in India – Case studies of three schools in Delhi*. India: Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt Ltd.

Johansson, S. T. (2014) A critical and contextual approach to inclusive education: perspectives from an Indian context. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. **18**(12**)**, pp.1219-1236.

Johansson, S T., Singal, N. and Samson, M. (2021): Education of Children with Disabilities in Rural Indian Government Schools: A Long Road to Inclusion. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*. pp.1-16.

Johnson-Harris, K. M. and Mundschenk, N, A. (2014) Working Effectively with Students with BD in a General Education Classroom: The Case for Universal Design for Learning. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*. **87**(4), pp.168-174.

Karande, S., Sholapurwala, R. and Kulkarni, M. (2011) Managing specific learning disability in schools in India. *Indian Pediatrics.* **48**(3), pp.515–520.

Katchergin, O. (2016) The DSM and learning difficulties: formulating a genealogy of the learning-disabled subject. *History of Psychiatry.* **27**(2), pp.190 –207.

Kirby, M. (2017) Implicit assumptions in special education policy: Promoting full inclusion for students with learning disabilities. *Child Youth Care Forum.* **46**, pp.175–191.

Krishnakumar, P., Sukumaran, S. and Jisha, A. (2011) Developing a model for resource room training for slow learners in normal schools. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*. **53**(4), pp.336-384.

Kundu, P. and Rice, M. (2020) Indian educators' perceptions of their inclusion implementation practices in secondary schools. *British Educational Research Journal.* **46**(4), pp.398-422.

Kumari, P., Nayan, R., Aggarwal, S. P. and Baswani, G. (2019). Rethinking teacher education programmes for inclusive classrooms: Issues and challenges in India. *International Journal of Information Education Technology.* **9**(2), pp.143–148.

Lebeer, J., Struyf, E., De Maeyer, S., Wilssens, M., Timbremont, B., Denys, A. and Vandeveire, H. (2010) Identifying special educational needs: putting a new framework for graded learning support to the test. *European Journal of Special Needs Education.* **25**(4**)**, pp.375-387.

Leeuw, R. R., Boer, A. A. and Bijstra, J. (2017) Teacher strategies to support the social participation of students with SEBD in the regular classroom. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. pp.1–15.

Lemons, C, J., Vaughn, S., Wexler, J., Kearns, D. M. and Sinclair, A. C. (2018). Envisioning an Improved Continuum of Special Education Services for Students with Learning Disabilities: Considering Intervention Intensity. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*. **33**(3), pp.131–143.

Loreman, T. (2014) Measuring inclusive education outcomes in Alberta, Canada. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. **18**(5), pp.459-483.

Lyons, W. E., Anthony, S., Thompson and Vianne Timmons. (2016) 'We are inclusive. We are a team. Let's just do it': commitment, collective efficacy, and agency in four inclusive schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. **20**(8), pp.889-907.

Malkani, R. (2017) Investigating the Educational Opportunities Provided for First Generation Learners in Rural Maharashtra, India. Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Northampton, UK.

Martin, C, S., Romig, C. J. and Kirisci, L. (2000) DSM-IV Learning Disorders in 10- to 12-Year-Old Boys With and Without a Parental History of Substance Use Disorders. *Prevention Science*. **1**(2), pp.107-113.

Math, S. B. D., Gowda, G. S., Basavaraju, V., Manjunatha, N., Kumar, C. N., Philip, S. and Gowda, M. (2019). The Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016: Challenges and opportunities. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry.* **61**, pp.S809-15.

McLeskey, J., Waldron, N. and Redd, L. (2014) A Case Study of a Highly Effective, Inclsuive Elemantary School. *The Journal of Special Education.* **48**(1), pp.59-70.

McLeskey, J. and Waldron, N. L. (2015) Effective leadership makes schools truly inclusive. *Kappanmagazine.org*. **V96**(N5), pp.68–73.

McMahon, S.D., Keys, C B., Beardi, L., Crouch, R. and Coker, Crystal. (2016). School Inclusion: A Multidimensional Framework And Links With Outcomes Among Urban Youth With Disabilities. *Journal of community psychology*. **44**(5), pp.656–673.

Meier, B. S. and Rossi, K. A. (2020) Removing Instructional Barriers with UDL. *Kappa Delta Pi Record.* **56**(2), pp.82-88.

Mieghem, A., Verschueren, K., Petry, K. and Struyf, E. (2020) An analysis of research on inclusive education: a systematic search and meta review. *International Journal of Inclusive Education.* **24**(6), pp**.**675-689.

Miskolci, J., Armstrong, D. and Spandagou, I. (2016) Teachers Perceptions of the Relationship between Inclusive Education and Distributed Leadership in two Primary Schools in Slovakia and New South Wales (Australia). *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability*. **18**(2), pp.53-65.

Moss P.A. (1996) Enlarging the Dialogue in Educational Measurement: Voices From Interpretive Research Traditions. *Educational Researcher*. **25**(1), pp.20-29.

Narzisi, A., Muratori, F. and Calderoni, S. (2013) Neuropsychological profile in high functioning autism spectrum disorders. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*. **43**(8), pp.1895–1909.

National Policy on Education (NPE) (1986). New Delhi: India. [online] Available from: http://www.ncert.nic.in/oth_anoun/npe86.pdf. [Accessed June 19, 2019].

National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) (2006) *Position paper National Focus Group on Education of Childen with Special Needs.* PD170T BB New Delhi: National Council of Educational Research and Training.

National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) (2018) [online]. Available from: https://ncte.gov.in/Website/PDF/Minimum%20Qualification_2015.pdf [Accessed July 1, 2020].

National Education Policy (NEP) (2020) [online]. Available from: https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf [Accessed July 1, 2021].

Nepi, L., Facondini, R., Nucci, F. and Peru, A. (2013) Evidence from full-inclusion model: the social position and sense of belonging of students with special educational needs and their peers in Italian primary school. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. **28**(3), pp.319-332.

Nicolaidou, M., Sophocleous, A. and Phtiaka, H. (2006) Promoting inclusive practices in primary schools in Cyprus: empowering pupils to build supportive networks. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. **21**(3), pp.251-267

Norwich, B. (2002) Education, Inclusion and Individual Differences: Recognising and Resolving Dilemmas. *British Journal of Educational Studies.* **50**(4), pp.482-502.

Norwich, B. (2014) 'Recognising value tensions that underlie problems in inclusive education'. *Cambridge Journal of Education*. **44**(4)**,** pp.495-510.

Nowell, L S., Norris, J M., White, D E and Moules, N J. (2017) Thematic Analysis: Striving to meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods.* **16**, pp.1-13.

Onwuegbuzie, A J. and Leech, N L. (2005) On Becoming a Pragmatic Researcher: The Importance of Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methodologies. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* **8**(5), pp.375-38.

Onwuegbuzie, A J. and Leech, N L. (2010) Generalization practices in qualitative research: a mixed methods case study. *Qual Quant*. **44,** pp.881–892.

Osiname, A. T. (2018) Utilizing the Critical Inclusive Praxis: The voyage of five selected school principals in building inclusive school cultures. *Improving Schools.* **21**(1), pp.63-83.

Oskarsdottir, E., Donnelly, V. and Turner-Cmuchal, M. (2020) Inclusive school leaders – their role in raising the achievement of all learners. *Journal of Educational Administration.* **58**(5), pp.521-537.

Paliokosta, P., and Blandford, S. (2010) Inclusion in school: a policy, ideology or lived experience? Similar findings in diverse school culture. *Support for Learning.* **25**(4), pp.179-186.

Pesonen, H., Kontu, E., Saarinen, M. and Pirttimaa, R. (2016) Conceptions associated with sense of belonging in different school placements for Finnish pupils with special education needs. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. **31**(1), pp.59-75.

Plan of Action (POA) (1992) [online]. Available from: https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/document-reports/POA_1992.pdf. [Accessed June 25, 2019].

Poon-McBrayer, K. F. and Wong, P. (2013) Inclusive education services for children and youth with disabilities: Values, roles and challenges of school leaders, *Children and Youth Services Review*. **35**(9), pp.1520–1525.

Prasad, P. (2005). *Crafting qualitative research: Working in the postpositivist tradition*. Armonk, NY: M E Sharpe Publishing.

Qvortrup, A. and Qvortrup, L. (2017) Inclusion: Dimensions of inclusion in education, *International Journal of Inclusive Education.* pp.1-15.

Rattray, J. and Jones, M. C. (2007) Essential elements of questionnaire design and development. *Journal of Clinical Nursing.* **16**, pp.234-243.

Reid, G., Elbehari, G. and Everatt, J. (2016) *Assessing Children with Specific Learning Difficulties*. Routledge.

Reindal, M. (2016) Discussing inclusive education: an inquiry into different interpretations and a search for ethical aspects of inclusion using the capabilities approach, *European Journal of Special Needs Education.* **31**(1), pp.1-12.

Right To Education (RTE) (2005) [online]. Available from Right to Information Act (India) (rti.gov.in) [Accessed April 19, 2020].

Right To Education (RTE) (2009) [online]. Available from http://eoc.du.ac.in/RTE%20-%20notified.pdf [Accessed April 19, 2020].

Right to People with Disablilities Act (RPWD) (2016) [online]. Available from: https://ncpedp.org/RPWDact2016 [Accessed April 19, 2020].

Robson, C. (2011) *Real World Research- A Resource for Social Scientists and Practioner Research*. Oxford: Blackwells.

Rose, R. (2010) *Confronting Obstacles to Inclusion*. London: Routledge.

Rose, R. (2016) *Inclusion: A process of building upon existing structures rather than demolishing and starting again.* Paper presented at The International Conference on Education for Sustainable Development: Empowering individuals with Multiple Disability, 27th and 28th February. New Delhi, India.

Rose, R. and Shevlin, M. (2017) A sense of belonging: Children's views of acceptance in "inclusive" mainstream schools. *International Journal of Whole Schooling.* Special issue, pp.65-80.

Rose, R. and Malkani, R. (2021) Cultural and ethical challenges in conducting international research in education. In J, Faintuch (Ed.) *Research Ethics: In Medicine, Humanities and Health.*

Rose, R., Narayan, J., Matam, S. and Reddy Sambram, P. (2021) A Comparison of Provision and Access to Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in a Metropolitan City and a Rural District in Telangana State. *Education Sciences,* **11**(3), pp.1-16.

Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) (2007) [online]. Available from: https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/india_inclusive_education.pdf [Accessed April 19, 2020].

Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) (2017) Manual for District-Level Functionaries. New Delhi: Government of India.

Samagra Shikhsa (2018). [online]. Available from: http://www.samagrashiksha.in/ [Accessed on May 12, 2022].

Sawhney, S. (2015) Unpacking the nature and practices of inclusive education: the case of two schools in Hyderabad, India. *International Journal of Inclusive Education.* **19**(9), pp.887-907.

Scanlon, D. (2013) 'Specific Learning Disability and Its Newest Definition: Which Is Comprehensive? and Which Is Insufficient?' *Journal of Learning Disabilities.* **46**(1), pp.26-33.

Schwartz-Shea, P. and Yanow, D. (2011). *Interpretive research design: Concepts and processes*. Routledge.

Sebba, J. and Ainscow, M. (1996) International developments in inclusive schooling: Mapping the issues, *Cambridge Journal of Education.* **26**(1), pp.5-14.

Shakespeare, T. and Watson, N. (1997) Defending the social model, *Disability & Society.* **12**(2), pp.293-300.

Shah, R., Das, A., Desai, I., and Tiwari, A. (2016) Teachers' concerns about inclusive education in Ahmedabad, India, *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*. **16**(1), pp.34–45.

Sharma, U. and Das, A. (2015) Inclusive education in India: Past, present and future, *Support for Learning*, **30**(1), pp.55–68.

Sharma, U. and Deppeler, J. (2005) Integrated Education in India: Challenges and Prospects, *Disability Studies Quarterly*. **25**(1).

Sharma, U., Forlin, C. and Loreman, T. (2008) Impact of training on pre-service teachers' attitudes and concerns about inclusive education and sentiments about persons with disabilities. *Disability & Society*. **23(**7), pp.773-785.

Sharma, U. and Jacobs, K. (2016) Predicting in-service educators' intentions to teach in inclusive classrooms in India and Australia. *Teaching and Teacher Education.* **55**(2016)**,** pp.13-23.

Sharma, S K. (2022) Nurses' awareness and adherence with national ethical guidelines for research in North India. *Nursing Ethics*. **29**(3), pp.733-741.

Singal, N. (2006a) An ecosystemic approach for understanding inclusive education: An Indian case study. *European Journal of Psychology of Education* **21**(3), pp.239-252.

Singal, N. (2006b) Inclusive Education in India: International concept, national interpretation, *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*.. **53**(3), pp.351-369.

Singal, N. (2019) Challenges and opportunities in efforts towards inclusive education: reflections from India. *International Journal of Inclusive Education* **23**(7), pp.827-840.

Solberg, S., Edwards, A. and Nyborg, G. (2020) Leading for School Inclusion and Prevention? How School Leadership Teams Support Shy Students and Their Teachers. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*. **65**(7), pp.1-14.

Soulis, S., Georgiou, A., Dimoula, K. and Rapti, D. (2016) Surveying inclusion in Greece: empirical research in 2683 primary school students. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. **20**(7), pp.770-783.

Srivastava, M., de Boer, A. and Sip, J. P. (2015) Inclusive education in developing countries: a closer look at its implementation in the last 10 years, *Educational Review*. **67**(2), pp.179-195.

Srivastava, M. (2018) Mapping Changes in Legislation and Implementation for Special Needs Education in India. *Annual Review of International Comparative Education.* Bingley: Emerald. pp.271–286.

Taylor, B. K. (2015) Content, Process, and Product: Modeling Differentiated Instruction, *Kappa Delta Pi Record*. **51**(1), pp.13-17.

Terzi, L. (2005a) A capability perspective on impairment, disability and special needs: Towards social justice in education, *Theory and Research in Education.* **3**(2), pp.197-223.

Terzi, L. (2005b) Beyond the Dilemma of Difference: The Capability Approach to Disability and Special Educational Needs. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*. **39**(3), pp.443-459.

Tezpur University, Equal Opportunity Policy For Persons With Disabilities. (2019) [online] Available from: http://www.tezu.ernet.in/PwD/Equal_Opportunity_Policy_under_RPwD_Act_2016.pdf [Accessed September 1, 2021].

The Hindu-1 (2019) [online]. Available from: https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/divyangjan-is-a-controversial-word-similar-to-mentally-ill-says-un-body/article29508027.ece [Accessed July 27, 2021].

Travers, J. (2011) Teachers' organisational practices and their perceptions of the benefits of support by withdrawal for mathematics in Irish primary schools. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. **26**(4), pp.461-477.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. (UNESCO) (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education.* Paris: UNESCO.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. (UNESCO) (2004) *Changing Teaching Practices - using curriculum differentiation to respond to students' diversity.* Paris: UNESCO.

United Nations. (UN) (2015). *Sustainable Development Goals*. New York: United Nations.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). (2006), [online]. Available from: http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=150/. [Accessed April 20, 2019].

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), (2017) *A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education*. [online]. Available from: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002482/248254e.pdf [Accessed January 10, 2020].

University of Northampton policies procedures and regulations (UoN, ethics policy) ,(2018). [online]. Available from: (https://www.northampton.ac.uk/about-us/governance-and-management/management/university-policies-procedures-and-regulations/) [Accessed June 07, 2018].

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2019), [online]. Available from: https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/IND [Accessed May 01, 2022].

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2018), [online]. Available from: https://www.unicef.org/india/ [Accessed June 18, 2022].

Wan, S. W. (2016) Differentiated instruction: Hong Kong prospective teachers' teaching efficacy and beliefs. *Teachers and Teaching*. **22**(2), pp.148-176.

WHODAS Manual for World Health Organization Disability Assessment Schedule (WHODAS 2.0), World Health Organization, 2010. [online]. Available from: https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/northampton/detail.action?docID=579100 [Accessed January 15, 2017].