

Analytical Study of Inclusive education in India

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Abstract

This paper studies the empirical observation of inclusive education in India. This shows a major limitation on the realization for the right to education without discrimination or exclusion. It calls for greater emphasis upon the fulfilment of state obligations to ensure that the fundamental right of equal opportunity in education which is common to almost all international human rights treaties is given effect to. It also calls for intensifying the action with emphasis on affirmative action and social protection measures for achieving equality of opportunities in education, both in law and in fact. As a result of scarcity of research on inclusive education in India and based on previous studies examining this challenging mandate, it was considered imperative to conduct an empirical study which would determine the barriers for its successful implementation.

The study is exploratory in nature and uses factor analysis to identify the most important barriers in equal access to education. The research methodology is empirical, and a survey of teacher's was conducted. The findings reveal that four factors are important for determining the barriers for inclusive education. The most important of which are financial constraints, Family Background, Socio-cultural and Geographic. In the last limitations with future research scope are presented and discussed in the paper.

Keywords – Inclusive education, financial constraints, Family Background, Socio-cultural factors, Factor analysis,

I. Introduction

Over the past two decades education has become a significant issue within the international development sector and likewise the term inclusive education has grown to become a familiar term (Urwick and Elliott, 2010). Increasingly the discourse around challenges in equal access to education has become synonymous with inclusive education and the removal of barriers for all children. More broadly, it has stimulated debate around the role of education in the promotion of rights and social justice (Miles and Singal, 2009). In 1994 the Salamanca Framework for Action can be consider the origin of the idea that education had an important role in eliminating discrimination and improving social justice. This Framework encouraged governments to stop segregating educational provision for children with special educational needs (including children with disabilities) and to ensure schools '...accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other condition. It challenged the idea that inclusive educational needs related only to children with disabilities. Instead it highlighted the fact that a range of vulnerabilities, such as poverty, ethnicity or language skills could affect any child's ability to learn. Hence inclusive education was conceived as a way to ensure that the needs of all children were being properly accommodated (Kiuppis, 2014).

II. Literature Review

Originating from the social model of disability, inclusion advocates schools' role in adapting and making accommodations within their system to assimilate children with varying learning needs (Lindsay, 2007). Ainscow (2006) viewed it as a never ending process that depended on continuous pedagogical and organizational development within the mainstream. Inclusion encompasses curriculum flexibility, pedagogy, infrastructural changes, sensitization of parents and peers as integral components of the accommodations that schools must make. Poor sensitivity of stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents and peers) and lack of readiness of the system become additional factors contributing to their deprivation.

There are different studies carried out by researchers in the past regarding implementation of the inclusive education.

Resource constraint is considered as barrier for inclusive education. An interesting perspective and one that is almost absent in the literature on implementing inclusive education comes from the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

sector. Erhard et al. (2013) point out there is little evidence being collected about its impact on children with disabilities. Kalyanpur (2008) also notes the resource challenges of implementation of inclusive education in India. There are some researchers who identified financial constraints hindering progress on implementing education policies aimed at children with disabilities and inclusive education.

Filmer and Pritchett (1999) analyze the effect of household wealth on students' educational attainment in developing countries. In South Asia, they identify significant attainment gaps between poor and rich households. Porta et al. (2011) analyze the influence of household poverty, location, and gender on equity in education. They show that poverty is the most significant barrier to educational equity in most countries. Kabeer and Mahmud (2009) assess the influence of household poverty and parents' education background on children's educational access in Bangladesh.

Children family well being also deprives them from education. Hanushek and Luque(2003) underline the importance of family background and show empirically how its effects on equity in education in less developed countries resemble those in the developed countries. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds and from families where the parents themselves have less education tend to systematically perform worse than students who do not have these barriers. Vaish and Gupta (2008) highlight the urban-rural divide, gender, caste, different religious groups and the multiplicity of languages as influential socio-demographic factors determining equity in education.

There is a large literature body on gender & caste inequity in education. In many countries worldwide and particularly in South Asia, girls still confront tremendous barriers to education with regard to access and attainment (Chisamya et al. 2012; Ramachandran 2012). For India, Bandyopadhyay and Subrahmanian (2008) find that although female enrolment has increased since the 1990s, there is still a substantial gap in upper primary and secondary schooling. Vogel and Korinek (2012), conducted a study in Nepal and find that overall households are more willing to invest in boys' education, although the willingness to invest in girls' schooling increases with higher socio-economic status. Hanna and Linden (2009) and Jacoby and Mansuri (2011) investigate interacting patterns of gender and caste based discrimination in India and Pakistan. Caste is an influential, culture-specific group characteristic impeding equitable educational opportunities in Nepal (Bhattachan et al. 2009) thus caste is a more powerful predictor of empowerment/inclusion than gender (Bennett 2006).

The income of the parents plays a strong determinant of children education. Regarding father's labour market position, we expect fathers who are in salaried employment to be more aware of the importance of education and hence to invest more in their children's education (Breen & Goldthorpe, 1997). The study carried out by Basu et al.(2003) find out that fathers who are in salaried employment are more likely to be aware of the importance of education and hence to invest more in their children's education. The children themselves may also be more aware of the benefits of education.

Acharya (2007) conducted study in Nepal and found multiple factors i.e. poverty, geography, gender, ethnicity and caste, disability responsible for inequity in education.

Glewwe et al. (2011) find ample empirical evidence that enrolment increases significantly when the distance to the nearest school decreases. Singh (2011) emphasizes discrepancies between rural and urban areas as well as a lack of relevant infrastructure. Bertini (2011), highlights the challenges faced by adolescent girls in rural areas in developing countries, thus looking at the intersecting effects of geography and gender.

III. Objectives of the Study

- To assess the situation of inclusive education in India
- To assess the factors affecting affecting inclusive education

IV. Research Methodology

This study applies a mixed-methods research design comprising qualitative and quantitative empirical research in order to identify different attributes on inclusive education in India. According to Bamberger (2000) mixed-methods designs are particularly useful for equity-focused assessments. The mixed approach broadens the conceptual and analytical framework since it captures not only the statistical significance of influential attributes, but also the underlying cultural perceptions and social norms. The mixed-methods design used in this paper thus strengthens validity and contextualizes the findings.

This research is exploratory in nature and uses a questionnaire for collecting the data. The literature review clearly indicates that different scholars presented different variables as barriers for inclusive education. It is further seen that a study on the inclusive education has been neglected by researchers in the Indian primary schools. The government primary school teachers in Uttar Pradesh were taken as the unit of sample. The sample size has been taken for this study was 300. The questionnaire included 11 variables to measure equal access to education. These are: Parents job

status, income, lack of resources, family well being, Proximity of the school, poverty, gender, parent's education, caste, religious groups, languages etc.

V. Results & Discussion

Data were analyzed using SPSS 20 software. The teachers were asked to rate the 11 variables on a five-point Likert scale according to their experience. The test of validity of data was examined with the help of a Kaiser- Meyer-Ohlin (KMO) measure of sample adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity. These two tests satisfied the validity of data for factor analysis as depicted in Table 1.

Table1. Kaiser-Meyer-Ohlin(KMO) Measure and Bartlett's Test

KMO Measure for Adequacy of sampling	.792	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi square	1623.453
	Df	120
	Sig.	.000

Source: Calculated

To determine the number of variables, only the Eigen values greater than or equal to 1 were considered (Guttman 1954; Kaiser 1960). The extraction method was Principal Axis Factoring; the rotation method was Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. The factor analysis resulted in four factors — financial constraints, Family back ground, socio-cultural, geographic. These four factors were found to have eigen values greater than 1 and, hence, are significant.

Table2. Factor loading of variables

Factor	Variables	Factor Loading	Reliability coefficient	Eigen value	Variation (%)
Financial constraints	Lack of resources	0.694	0.857	3.766	32.412
	Poverty	0.884			
	Income	0.683			
Family background	Parents education	0.650	0.814	1.822	12.638
	Family well being	0.785			
	Parents job status	0.412			
Socio-cultural	Gender	0.72	0.763	1.582	9.260
	Caste	0.885			
	Religious groups	0.725			
	languages	0.308			
Geographic	Proximity of the school	0.637	0.747	1.453	8.454

Source: Calculated

The reliability coefficients of these factors range from 0.74 to 0.85. The factor loading of the variables determining barriers in each factor are shown in Table2. The most important factor determining barrier for inclusive education was found to be financial constraints since the eigen value and percent of variation explained by this factor are 3.766 and 32.412, respectively. This factor consists of three variables with a reliability coefficient of 0.857. It shows that the included variables explain this factor to the extent of 85.7. The percent variation explained by this factor is 32.4 percent. The second most important factor identified is Family background. The respective eigen value is 1.822.

This factor consists of three variables, with reliability coefficients of 0.814. The percent variation explained by this factor is 12.638.

The Third important factors determining barrier for inclusive education in primary schools as identified by factor analysis are Socio-cultural with reliability coefficients of 0.763. This factor consists of four variables with eigen value 1.582. The percent variation explained by these factors is 9.2.

The last important factor is geographic which is related to the proximity of the school for children. This factor is having only one variable with reliability coefficient of .747. The percent variation explained by this variable is 8.4.

Table 3 shows the correlation among various factors. As depicted from Table 3, there is a low correlation between different factors, the maximum being 0.366 (between the factors financial constraints and socio-cultural). This means that all the four factors are independent, which implies that they are measuring unrelated dimensions.

Table3. Factor correlation matrix

Factors	Financial constraints	Family Background	Socio-cultural	Geographic
Financial constraints	1.000	.170	.366	.327
Family background	.170	1.000	.318	.323
Socio-cultural	.366	.318	1.000	.342
Geographic	.327	.323	.342	1.000

Source: Calculated

The results provide statistical evidence to support identified determinants of inclusive education as Financial constraints, Family back ground, Socio-cultural and Geographic.

Financial constraints - This aspect includes the Lack of resources, Poverty, Income as the barriers for inclusive education. This factor is most important from the teacher's point of view. It has also been supported by previous studies (Vorapanya & Dunlap (2014), Breen & Goldthorpe, 1997, Porta et al. (2011).

Family background - This aspect includes Parents education. Family well being, Parents job status. These factors have been found to impact inclusive education in past studies (Hanushek and Luque(2003), Breen and Goldthorpe, (1997).

Socio-cultural- The dimensions included are Gender, Caste, Religious groups, and languages.This factor has been identified as a determinant of inclusive education (Huisman et al.(2010), Acharya (2007), Hanna and Linden (2009), Jacoby and Mansuri (2011).

Geographic – This aspect includes the proximity of the school to attend the school. This factor has been identified as barrier for inclusive education (Glewwe et al. (2011),Singh (2011), Bertini (2011)).

VI. Conclusion

The contribution of this study is the identification of factors that determine barriers for inclusive education in primary schools in Mahoba UP India. The study is based on empirical research. Determinants identified are Financial constraints, Family Background, Socio-cultural and geographic. Financial & Family back ground are considered most important by Primary teachers. The study thus provides a direction for academician, researchers and education administrators for improvement so that the objective of RTE can be fully met. The limitation of this study is that the only few schools has been covered and the sample size is too small to generalize the results. The future study could be conducted by covering all the Districts school in the states with some new variables.

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