

Pedagogical Practice in an Inclusive Classroom: Opportunities and Challenges

Priyanka Barman

(Research Scholar)

Department of Education, Assam University, Silchar

Prof. Ram Kumar Mahto

ABSTRACT: Inclusive education aims to provide equitable learning opportunities to all students, regardless of their background, caste, gender, abilities, disabilities, and diverse needs. Inclusive pedagogical practice represents a dynamic and adaptable approach to teaching that responds effectively to the demands of inclusive education. The study examines the pedagogical practices in inclusive classrooms with a focus on the opportunities they offer and challenges they present for teachers and students in inclusive classrooms. The study highlights that differentiated instruction, culturally adaptable instruction, universal design learning, collaborative learning, and peer support can foster equity and inclusivity in education. Although some barriers are there that hinder the effective implementation of inclusive education, such as a lack of trained teachers, insufficient funds, resources, large classroom size, and rigidity of the curriculum. The study concludes that effective inclusive pedagogy requires continuous professional development, a positive attitude, and a genuine whole-school commitment to equity and belonging.

KEYWORDS: Inclusive education, inclusive pedagogy, pedagogical practice, opportunities, and challenges.

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I. INTRODUCTION:

Education is the fundamental right of every person in this world. There is a growing number of commissions, committees, and policies related to education and its rights. This educational commission and committees play a vital role in promoting educational rights by shaping laws, principles, policies, and practices that ensure accessible, equitable, and quality education. Inclusive education is a powerful approach to bring access, equity, and quality in education by ensuring an inclusive environment for all learners without any discrimination. In order to make inclusive education successful in practice, educators must use inclusive pedagogy, which supports all children's learning needs through flexible and fair teaching strategies. Inclusive pedagogy helps to improve practical strategies and an adaptive mindset that provides an equitable learning environment for all. However, some challenges prevent putting inclusive pedagogy into practice in the classroom. Teachers often face challenges, including a lack of professional training, resources, classroom size, insufficient time, rigid curriculum, and attitudinal barriers that hinder effectively implied inclusive pedagogies. Although there are some opportunities also there that encourage student empathy, collaboration, and holistic development of learners. This paper explores the present challenges and opportunities associated with pedagogical practice in an inclusive classroom.

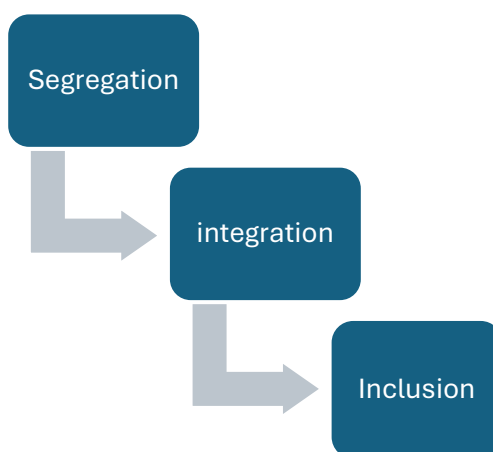
1.1. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: CONCEPT, IMPORTANCE, AIMS

Education is a gift for every child. Education is meant for every child regardless of their background, gender, or abilities. The concept of inclusive education is based on the belief that education is a basic human right, and every child has the right to get quality education without any discrimination. Respect for diversity is the foundation of inclusive education, which accepts individual differences as a strength rather than an obstacle to learning. It is also based on the idea of social justice and participation, to eliminate discrimination, segregation, exclusion, and prejudice in the education system. Inclusive education goals are fulfilled by enrolling all children in the same classroom.

The concept of inclusive education embodies democratic principles by fostering accessible and equitable learning facilities for all in the same environment. Inclusive education not only benefits children with special needs but also their peers, family, and the wider community (Lopatynska et al., 2022). Inclusive education reflects the idea that every child is a valuable member of the school community. When students learn together in the same environment, they develop empathy, mutual understanding, respect for each other, and strengthen unity in society.

According to UNESCO, inclusive education is a method where all students' needs are fulfilled, and they can participate and succeed together in education.

It is important to look at the historical paradigm that comes before inclusive education in order to place it within a large educational conversation. Historically, learners with disabilities were not taught with the non-disabled children in the same classroom. This concept of inclusion allows all children to evolve through three major approaches: Segregation, integration, and Inclusion.



Segregation: Segregation means separation. It means separating people or groups based on their different backgrounds. In education, it specifically means placing students in different schools, classes, or programmes apart from other children. Many years ago in history, some students were separated from other children or from regular schools because of their social, cultural, emotional, and physical barriers.

Integration: Integration is the opposite of segregation. Integration means bringing different people together in the same environment, but with limited support. Integration improves the quality of education but does not guarantee full participation.

Inclusion: inclusion goes beyond integration. Inclusion ensures that every person gets support according to their own needs. Inclusion not only includes disabled children but also ensures that children from culturally, socially, and financially disadvantaged backgrounds have the opportunities to meet their needs and learn together with the non-disabled children.

In conclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion represent different meanings and different strategies for promoting equality and diversity in society and education. Segregation means separating children based on their background, integration means bringing all children in the same place but with limited support, and inclusion means providing equity and accessibility to all children according to their own needs.

1.2. AIMS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:

- I. **Education for all:** The concept of education for all is a global initiative led by UNESCO to ensure quality education for all. Education for all states that every child has the right to receive quality education in a regular school, regardless of their background, religion, culture, abilities, language, or socioeconomic status.
- II. **Improve the quality of education:** inclusive education is intended to raise the standard of education by respecting the needs of every child. Its goal is to create a flexible teaching and learning environment that provides sufficient resources and modifies teaching strategies based on the diverse needs of the classroom, rather than separating students into different classrooms. Where every child can grow and build together.
- III. **Development of brotherhood:** The development of brotherhood is considered the aim of inclusive education since inclusive education brings all children together in a common environment despite their diversity. When students from various backgrounds learn together in the same environment, they may learn to accept, respect, and value their diversity, and comprehend empathy towards each other
- IV. **Early identification of the child:** Early identification of children with special needs or learning difficulties is one of the crucial purposes of inclusive education. Early identification of children's needs enables a teacher to adapt appropriate teaching strategies, resources, materials, or technological devices that help students to meet their requirements.

- V. Promote equity and social justice: inclusive education guarantees that all students have equal right to an accessible education, irrespective of their diverse backgrounds. It promotes equity and social justice by appreciating variety and treating every student fairly and with respect.
- VI. Creating awareness about diversity: Raising awareness about diversity is one of the major goals of inclusive education. It helps people to comprehend their knowledge, value, respect, and appreciate diversity. It enhances the sense of empathy and mutual understanding. Additionally, it makes an individual a responsible and compassionate member of a multicultural society.

1.3. CONCEPT OF INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES:

Pedagogy is the theory and practice of education that directs the process of teaching and learning. It covers the teaching methods, principles, techniques, and concepts for transmitting knowledge, fostering skills, and creating meaningful learning experiences. The term "pedagogy" is used consistently in three ways in literature: first, it refers to teaching methods, instructional strategy, and curriculum design. The second one covers an all-embracing term for education in poststructuralist thought, and the third one is to express and address moral education and discourse about teaching and learning, write it differently (Bruner, 1996; Freire, 2005; Van Manen, 1991, 199; Guðjónsdóttir & Óskarsdóttir, 2016). The concept of inclusive pedagogy refers to the idea that teaching strategies should be designed to enable all children to engage and learn regardless of their personal circumstances, background, and abilities. Here, teachers plan teaching methods that are suitable for every student in the classroom. The fundamental idea is that diversity in the classroom is natural and beneficial, and that teachers should make sure that all students feel included and capable of success by using flexible approaches to teaching and learning and a supportive environment.

Inclusive pedagogical practice refers to all teaching strategies, methods, and approaches that teachers can use in the teaching and learning process to ensure equitable learning access to all children, regardless of their gender, background, abilities, or disabilities. Teachers use different types of instructional materials for all students in a mainstream classroom without separating students based on their abilities and disabilities. There are different types of inclusive pedagogical practices, including differentiated instruction, universal design for learning, co-teaching and collaborative practice, culturally responsive teaching, etc.

1.4. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

In the contemporary education context, inclusive education has become the key priority for maintaining social justice, equity, and equality in education. In light of the growing diversity in the classroom- such as students with disabilities, varied diverse backgrounds including learning and language- teachers are expected to implement inclusive pedagogical practice in the classroom that addresses the needs of diverse learners. There is a growing need of systematically study and understanding of inclusive pedagogical practices used by teachers in inclusive classrooms. Examine these practices to identify the gap between policies of inclusive pedagogy and their actual practices in the classroom. Moreover, its help to understand how effectively teachers respond to the diverse learning needs of students. The purpose of this study is to identify effective teaching methods, highlight current challenges, and investigate opportunities for enhancing classroom practices. Additionally, this research contributes to reaching national education goals and global commitment goals like SDG 4 by strengthening the foundation of inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

1.5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- I. To study the key concept of inclusive pedagogy in contemporary teacher education.
- II. To identify the opportunities and benefits of implementing inclusive pedagogical practice in the classroom.
- III. To identify the challenges that teachers face in implementing inclusive teaching practices.

1.6. RESEARCH DESIGN:

Methodology in research refers to the systematic plan and procedure that lays out the overall approach adopted in a study. The present study employed a conceptual research design to gain in-depth knowledge and a clear conceptual understanding of the chosen variable of the study by exploring and synthesizing existing peer-reviewed journals, Article, book, government documents, policies, and open-access online repositories. By analyzing all existing literature reviews related to this study, researchers seek to clarify definitions, explore interrelationships between concepts, and identify gaps or challenges.

1.7. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Morina (2020) conducted a study on inclusive pedagogy and explored its conceptual distinction from inclusive education and inclusive practice. The results show that inclusive pedagogy is a multidimensional strategy that encompasses teachers' beliefs, knowledge, instructional design, and classroom actions. The study also highlighted that research on inclusive education is mostly done in Western countries and largely examines only partial aspects, such as beliefs, knowledge, or actions, while the design dimension is often missing, indicating a lack of holistic research. Although research found few teaching pedagogical approaches to make teaching learning inclusion, such as service learning, online learning, multiple intelligences, universal instructional design, and digital storytelling. Overall, the study highlighted a significant gap and need for more comprehensive research on inclusive pedagogy.

Somma & Binnett (2020) explored a study on the experience and perception of teachers moving from teaching self-contained special education classes to inclusive classes and their attitude towards students with disabilities and inclusive teaching practices. The researcher collected data from ten educators with a phenomenological case study design through surveys, focus groups, and individual interviews. The results of the study highlighted that teachers move through different stages of understanding inclusion, shifting from a charity-based to a rights-based perspective. Positive experience with children with disabilities plays an important role in influencing their attitude to being responsible for creating an inclusive classroom for all. Further, professional development and continuous experience build their skills and confidence.

Visković (2021) explored a study titled "Inclusive Pedagogical Practice as a Predictor of Quality Early Childhood Education". Researchers conducted this study among 146 teachers from Early Childhood Education (ECE) settings using an inclusive pedagogical practice questionnaire to analyze teachers' opinions on inclusive pedagogical practice dimensions. The findings revealed that teachers largely believe that inclusive pedagogical practice is important for early childhood education as its support equal participation in learning activities. Teachers identify some key dimensions, including i) social interaction, ii) professional development, iii) planning, monitoring, and evaluation of curriculum, and some least important dimensions are i) Educational strategies, ii) Upbringing values. Moreover, researchers highlighted that the effective implementation of inclusive values and practices in Early Childhood Education settings depends on continuous professional development of teachers.

Ioannidi and Malafantis (2022) conducted a study to understand the concept and practice of inclusive education and inclusive pedagogy. This study followed the qualitative literature review approach. The findings highlighted that inclusive education and pedagogy are fundamental for creating an equitable learning environment for all learners. The study highlights that schools play a central role in implementing inclusion through inclusive pedagogy, which involves flexible, student-centered teaching methods and accessible curricula. It emphasizes key principles such as equity, social justice, respect for diversity, and universal access, supported by practices like differentiated instruction and universal learning design. Moreover, teachers play a crucial role in creating a positive learning environment through different strategies, such as adaptive learning, collaborative support, and a positive attitude towards all students

Kaur and Bhatia (2024) did research to examine key principles and strategies for promoting inclusivity and addressing diverse learner needs in line with NEP 2020, critically analyse pedagogical practices and their impact on empowering diverse learners in an inclusive educational environment. The study found that inclusive education is a paradigm change that respects all children by removing barriers to participation and appreciating individual diversity for equity. Highlighted some pedagogical practices, including Universal design learning (UDL), Individual instruction, culturally adaptable instruction, Multidisciplinary collaborative learning, Scaffolding, Peer tutoring, personalized tech-driven experience, and uses of assistive technologies for accessibility. Its positively impact on inclusive education, while some barriers, such as limited time, lack of resources, and lack of training that negatively impact inclusive education.

Savinova et al (2024) conducted a study on the topic "Equitable Learning for All: A Review of Challenges and Prospects in Inclusive Pedagogy". The main objective of this research is to analyze existing research to identify recent trends, challenges, and achievements, and propose practical strategies for improving inclusive pedagogy. Findings of the study revealed that inclusive education has grown through enhanced integration of technology, greater emphasis on teachers' training, and growing awareness of socio-cultural diversity. However, some barriers hinder effective implementation, such as inadequate teacher training, insufficient accessibility and resources, and socio-cultural biases. Further researchers highlighted that inclusive education has improved accessibility, personalized learning, enhanced social integration, and improved overall quality of education. Overall, the study comes to the conclusion that a supportive learning environment, proper teacher training, and effective use of technology in education are necessary for the success of inclusive education.

Bindhani and Gopinath (2024) explore research on the challenges and successes of implementing inclusive education practices. The findings of the study revealed that there are various issues associated with the implementation of inclusive education practice, negative attitudes, and misconceptions towards disability, which exclude students with disabilities. Some schools face a lack of resources, funding, trained teachers, and insufficient

assistive tools. Additionally, research also highlighted that proper teacher training, support services, collaboration, and a positive attitude towards inclusive education can successfully create equal opportunity for every child

Filippou et al. (2025) investigated a systematic review on inclusive education policies and practices in higher education to identify the knowledge gap within policies and practices. Researchers have gone through different scholarly high-standard journals published between 2001 and 2021. Findings of the study revealed that the study of inclusive policy and practices has gradually increased over the last few decades. Inclusion was largely framed around disability, with a narrow conceptualization of culture, race, gender, and language. Moreover, the study also highlights some practices curriculum should be learner-centered, collaborative, and flexible with different strategies of teaching to promote inclusivity.

Rakshit and Yadav (2025) did a study on inclusive education practice in the context of NEP 2020 and highlighted the challenges and effective strategies for implementing inclusive education to foster an equitable learning environment. Study revealed that inclusive education practice strongly aligns with NEP 2020 goals, which prioritize accessibility, equity, diversity, and empowerment. Different challenges arise in implementing inclusive education effectively, such as structural, attitudinal, and infrastructural. Additionally, research also identified that through learner-centered pedagogy, continuous teacher training, sufficient resources, and a cooperative support system can foster inclusiveness in education.

1.8. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY:

The results and discussion presented in this section are based on the systematic analysis of the literature reviews on inclusive pedagogy, practice, and education. The synthesis of the studies revealed that various significant themes, such as differentiated instruction, flexible curriculum, adapting different teaching strategies, learner centred approach, play a major role in promoting inclusion in education and addressing the diverse needs of students in the classroom. Findings revealed that inclusive education and an inclusive environment are very important for the improvement of the whole society and every learner in the world. (Visković, 2021) The quality of inclusive pedagogical practice is notably anticipated by teachers' professional competencies, personal values, and attitude towards inclusive education. According to (Cate et al., 2018) teachers' attitudes and competencies are major factors in their willingness and ability to implement inclusive education practices in the classroom. Positive attitudes towards inclusive education promote openness and acceptance of diverse learners, and skilled educators are better prepared with teaching pedagogical strategies. Teachers must first acquire a set of abilities that allow them to support inclusionary practice in their classroom before creating inclusive pedagogy (Moriña, 2020). Since teachers are the main agents to implement inclusive education in the classroom, they can translate policies and concepts into classroom practice. Pedagogical choice, classroom management strategies, and responsiveness to diverse learning needs directly impact inclusion in education.

Different strategies and pedagogical approaches are available that can be developed to promote inclusive education in diverse classroom environments. (Kaur & Bhatia, 2024) Highlighted some pedagogical practices, including Universal design learning (UDL), Individual instruction, culturally adaptable instruction, multidisciplinary collaborative learning, Scaffolding, Peer tutoring, personalized tech-driven experience, and uses of assistive technologies for accessibility. Further, as stated by (Filippou et al., 2025; Rakshit & Yadav, 2025) Inclusion can be fostered by a student-centered approach, continuous teacher training, a flexible teaching approach, and collaborative and cooperative teaching strategies. Moreover, according to (Moriña, 2020) Some other teaching pedagogical strategies to make teaching learning inclusion, such as service learning, online learning, universal instructional design, multiple intelligences, and digital storytelling. Thus, while a range of inclusive pedagogy existed, their success largely depends on how effectively teachers adapt and apply them in diverse classroom settings. Inclusive pedagogical practices are vital for today's diverse classroom, guaranteeing equitable access to learning for all learners regardless of their background, gender, ability, disabilities, and socio-economic status. Inclusive pedagogy improves learning outcomes for all students, not just those with special needs. When teachers create a more supportive and engaging learning environment, these strategies promote creativity, critical thinking, and active engagement. Despite its importance, the implementation of inclusive pedagogical practice is dominated by certain significant barriers. (Bindhani & Gopinath, 2024) As per their study, various issues associated with the implementation of inclusive education practice, including negative attitudes, lack of resources, insufficient funds, lack of trained teachers, lack of technological devices, misconception towards disabilities. Research done by (Chaudhary, 2026) highlighted that inadequate teacher preparation and a lack of professional training are the most serious challenges that make educators unprepared and less confident to address diverse learning needs in an inclusive classroom. Furthermore, research conducted by (Singh & Sarkar, 2026) illuminated that some institutional challenges exist, including weak policy implementation, lack of administrative support, and big classroom sizes, which are creating major issues in effectively practicing inclusive pedagogy. In this context, maintaining meaningful inclusive practices requires continuous professional development, institutional support, and dedication to equity.

1.9. CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, an inclusive classroom pedagogy is a moral commitment to fair education for all learners as well as professional liability. While its present many opportunities to improve teaching and learning, it equally demands consideration of the challenges that educators and educational institutions face during practice. An inclusive classroom can achieve its goal only when it is supported by strong institutional support, professional development, sufficient resources, and an environment that believes in acceptance and belongingness.

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