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Right to Inclusive Education for Children with Autism

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I. INTRODUCTION

Autism is a **neuropsychiatric disorder** characterized by deficits in social interaction and communication, and unusual and repetitive behaviour. Some, but not all, people with autism are non-verbal. Autism affects information processing in the brain by altering the nerve cells, how this occurs is not well understood. The number of people diagnosed with autism has increased dramatically since the 1980s, partly due to change in diagnostic practice. The question of whether actual prevalence has increased remains unresolved. Autism is an invisible disability in India. World Health organization (W.H.O) does not maintain yearly reports on prevalence on autism. According to Autism Society of America 2007 estimates, approximately 2,000,000 persons in India alone are likely to be autistic[1]. UNESCO Report states that, in developing countries 90% do not attend school. According to a 1998 UNDP report the global literacy rate for adults with disabilities is as low as 3% and 1% for women with disabilities. [2]There are very few surveys on India which counts the number of persons with autism. The latest figures available are 1 in 250, which is based on a conservative estimate of the Rehabilitation Council of India, in 2004[3].Studies determining the prevalence of children with autism are still not done in India. Autism is a learning disability.[4]The main characteristics of persons with learning disability are poor memory, short attention span, uneven areas of ability and problem regarding social behaviour. Learning Disability (LD) continues a genuine problem for a nation's development. "A recent survey of the **National Center for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People** (NCPEDP) reveals that only 1.2 per cent of persons with disabilities in India have any form of education. The NCPEDP report states that among 89 schools, surveyed 34 did not have a single student with disability. Moreover, unfortunately 18 of them have a policy against giving admission to such students. In India, 13-14% of all school children suffer from learning disorders such as autism, dyslexia etc."[5] Unfortunately, most schools fail to lend a sympathetic ear to their problems. As a result, these children are earmarked as failures. The main problems of children with learning disabilities are the difficulties in adjustment in overcrowded classrooms. They need special educators in a mainstream class and a resource room. But maximum schools in India fail to provide these facilities. So "*Education for all*" is still a distant dream for people in India. In urban India, there do exist only a few special schools are made for children with autism. However the rural people of India are devoid of these facilities. Special schools cause segregation of these children from childhood and finally when they grow up it become difficult for them to adjust in the society. People with disabilities should be given the right to education to eradicate the negative attitude towards such persons in the family and societal spheres. They have and equal right as human beings and government should ensure opportunities for them in every sector. The Millennium Development Goals[6] has made primary education compulsory for all children in its second goal. But, it is seen in the report of the U.N that still three fourth of children with disabilities are devoid of education. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) clearly expresses the right of each child to education (Article 28)[7].It states the responsibility of

[1] Autism Society of America 2007 annual report
[2] United Nations Fact sheet on Persons with Disabilities

[3] http://www.bapsi.org/rti-queries-responses-1/on-status-of-mental-challenges

[4] The World Health Organization defines learning disabilities as 'a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind'.
[5] http://www.sspconline.org/opinion/EducationforAllandLearningDisabilitiesinIndia_SangeetaSakhuja_041004
[6] Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education within 2015
[7]. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:
(a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
(b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
(c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
(d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;
(e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

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governments to ensure that children with disabilities receive quality education (Article 23)[8].This is reinforced by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This Convention places an obligation on governments to ensure an inclusive system (Article 24)[9].It also highlights the role of international co-operation in helping governments meet their responsibilities (Article 32)[10].In India there are, four national legislations to protect the interest of the persons with disabilities. They are the Mental Health Act(1987), the Rehabilitation Council of India Act (1991), the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Full Participation and Protection of Rights) Act (1995) and the National Trust for Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act (2000).

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[8] 1. States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.
2. States Parties recognize the right of the disabled child to special care and shall encourage and ensure the extension, subject to available resources, to the eligible child and those responsible for his or her care, of assistance for which application is made and which is appropriate to the child's condition and to the circumstances of the parents or others caring for the child.
3. Recognizing the special needs of a disabled child, assistance extended in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article shall be provided free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, and shall be designed to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development
4. States Parties shall promote, in the spirit of international cooperation, the exchange of appropriate information in the field of preventive health care and of medical, psychological and functional treatment of disabled children, including dissemination of and access to information concerning methods of rehabilitation, education and vocational services, with the aim of enabling States Parties to improve their capabilities and skills and to widen their experience in these areas. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

[9] 1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and life long learning directed to:
a) The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;
b) The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;
c)Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.
2. In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that: Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability; Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided; Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education; Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.
3. States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community.
a) Facilitating the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring;
b)Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community;
c)Ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deaf blind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development.
4. In order to help ensure the realization of this right, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.

5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

6 1. States Parties recognize the importance of international cooperation and its promotion, in support of national efforts for the realization of the purpose and objectives of the present Convention, and will undertake appropriate and effective measures in this regard, between and among States and, as appropriate, in partnership with relevant international and regional organizations and civil society, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities. Such measures could include, inter alia: Ensuring that international cooperation, including international development programmes, is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities;Facilitating and supporting capacity-building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programmes and best practices; Facilitating cooperation in research and access to scientific and technical knowledge Providing, as appropriate, technical and economic assistance, including by facilitating access to and sharing of accessible and assistive technologies, and through the transfer of technologies.
2. The provisions of this article are without prejudice to the obligations of each State Party to fulfill its obligations under the present Convention.

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In the Mental Health Act provisions for taking care of mentally ill patients are mentioned. Nothing is said about the rights of persons with disabilities. It says nothing about the right to education, employment etc of person with mental illness. In the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Full Participation and Protection of Rights) Act (Article 26)[11] establishes the scheme of free education for children with disabilities .But in reality that is not provided. In the National Trust Act only the concept of guardianship is explained. Nothing is mentioned about providing education for children with autism. In the Rehabilitation Council of India Act provisions are stated for training teachers to handles students with disabilities. In the Act, it is mentioned that all normal school teachers will have to receive special education, but this does not happen in reality. The majority of persons with disabilities themselves or their families, especially those from the rural areas, do not know that such legislation, meant for the protection of their rights exists. Some magistrates and judges are also unaware about the existence of such laws. According to the report of the *UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education (Munoz, 2007)*, some countries just depend on Non Government Organizations' provide an adequate framework for inclusive education. This problem can only be solved if inclusive education is recognized as a right. The international organizations like U.N, U.N.E.SCO, W.H.O, I.L.O and countries should set minimum standards for achieving the right of inclusive education.

II. THE PROBLEM

Inclusive education means that students with disabilities are receiving *individualized education programs* (IEP) in their home schools. The students receive specialized instruction and support within the context of the core curriculum and general class activities. Inclusion is an effort to make sure students with disabilities go to school along with their friends and neighbours. Efforts are also made to make sure that students receive "*specially designed instruction and support*". This is required for a high standard of education, so that they can become successful learners. Inclusion is not the same as mainstreaming or integration. Mainstreaming attempts to move students from special education classrooms to regular education classrooms only in situations where they are able to keep up with their typically developing peers without specially designed instruction or support. Integration provides only "part-time" inclusion, which prevents the students from becoming full members of the classroom community.

Special education refers to a range of educational and social services provided to the children with disabilities apart from the mainstream schools. Special education is designed to ensure that students with disabilities are provided with an environment appropriate for their educational needs. Emotional disturbances act as a barrier to education for students affected with autism. But public schools do not have the staff and resources to handle children with disabilities. In this way, the education in special schools segregates the students with disabilities from the society. Students with disabilities experience increased self-esteem by the mere fact they are attending classes in a regular education setting rather than in a special education setting. Students without disabilities experience growth in social behavior and self esteem. They easily accept the student with disabilities, when they experience inclusive programming.

In India, the concept of inclusive education existed from the Vedic era. In ancient times, when students were taught in *gurukul*, there were no systems of special schools. All types of children with disabilities were taught together each according to her or his abilities. It was inclusive education in true terms. In rural India all children with disabilities are provided education at same school. This is inclusive education what we dream to achieve in urban schools even. The teachers trained to handle the students with special needs are very less. There is a huge gap between the trained educators available and the children that need their services. In this situation, the teacher will have to be trained once the children get admitted.

A major deterrent in implementing inclusive education in India is the lack of statistics on the prevalence of intellectual disability. The large numbers of children in most schools act as a barrier for providing inclusive education. Most of our schools except the elitist ones have classes where the student teacher ratios are between 40 to 60. The free educational institutions offering service to the poor and some middle class communities fail to impart quality education. The numbers of children attending are very high, so they cannot fulfill the needs of so many children. The disparity between elite educational institutions and their poorer counterparts is too glaring even to be mentioned. The existing laws are also not helping children with autism. For instance The Persons with

[11] The appropriate Governments and the local authorities shall-
(a) Ensure that every child with a disability has access to free education in an appropriate environment till he attains the age of eighteen years;
(b) Endeavor to promote the integration of students with disabilities in the normal schools;
(c) Promote setting up of special schools in Government and private sector for those in need of special education, in such a manner that children with disabilities living in any part of the country have access to such schools;
(d) Endeavor to equip the special schools for children with disabilities with vocational training facilities

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Disabilities Act has not included the term 'autism', so the disability certificates are also not available to these children. They are devoid of all the facilities to which they have right. The right to education of all children is basic right not a privilege.

In India, especially in Kolkata there is lack of awareness among people about autism. Many people confuse autism with mental retardation, so early diagnosis and training of children with autism is hampered. There is lack of financial assistance by the government, so people below the poverty line cannot receive any training. The dropouts are more among girls than boys. Gender discrimination especially in case of children with disabilities is still prevalent in the country. The family members' regards children with disabilities as a burden. They prefer to keep them locked in the house in the name of safety. The girls are devoid of sex education and therefore, prone to sexual violence and harassment since they are easy targets.

A. Understanding Autism

Existing literature on autism and related communication impairments focuses mainly on school -age children and their classroom environment which can be sStudied from the work of Potter and Whittaker, 2001. Potter and Whittaker's research is however very important since it shows how environmental influences can deeply affect autistic patterns of communication. Extensive literature has been published about the nature of Autistic Spectrum Disorder in all its forms (Asperger, 1991; Atwood, 1998; Wing, 1991) but the exact statistics of people with autism is not available.

The peers report negative impressions toward autism despite increased contact between children with autism and typical peers as seen from the literature review. Parents remain confused, whether to disclose that a child has autism to school professionals and classmates, as this leads to stigmatizing responses. Proponents of disclosure, on the other hand, have argued that disclosure of autism is appropriate and may lead to improved communication between families and school professionals and peer relationships within the school setting. For example, children with autism whose diagnosis was disclosed fully to school professionals and peers received more consistent social support within the classroom and during playground activities as seen from the **Ochs report.**

B. Overcoming Prejudices Of Autism

(Ronai 1997; Booth & Booth 2000) stated that children accept mother effected with mental disorder more easily than adults. (Edgerton 1967; Hayman 1990) states that children of mothers with intellectual disabilities are subjected to stigma and discrimination. The community-based social service agencies help to the mothers of children with intellectual disabilities. The works of Dagnan and Waring (2004) proved that psychological distress for children with intellectual disabilities is associated with stigma. Szivos-Bach (1993) works shows that stigma lower self esteem of children. This is a part of depression for adolescents with intellectual disabilities. Literature of developing counties on this context is missing. In the literature the methods to cope up with this problem is not clearly discussed. Any law or methods to save the families members of children with intellectual disabilities from stigma are also not highlighted.

C. Education And Autism

1) Segregated Education

Early American studies on 'full inclusion' reported results not supportive in inclusion. A study carried out by Coates (1989), reported that general education teachers in Iowa district of America did not have a negative view on inclusion, nor were they supportive of 'full inclusion'. Similar findings were reported by Semmel et al. (1991) who, after having surveyed 381 elementary educators in Illinois and California (both general and special), concluded that those educators were not dissatisfied with a special education system. Another American study by Vaughn et al (1996) examined mainstream and special teachers' perceptions of inclusion through the use of focus group interviews. The majority of these teachers, who were not currently participating in inclusive programmes, had strong, negative feelings about inclusion and felt that decision makers were out of touch with classroom realities. The teachers identified several factors that would affect the success of inclusion, including class size, inadequate resources, the extent to which all students would benefit from inclusion and lack of adequate teacher preparation. However, in studies where teachers had active experience of inclusion, contradictory findings were reported. A study by Villa et al. (1996) yielded results which favoured the inclusion of children in the ordinary school. Coleridge, (1993) has pointed development assistance is based on charity model. A well known disability Activist in southern Africa and Secretary General of the Pan African Federation of the Disabled (PAFOD), Joshua Malinga is quoted in Coleridge (1993).He has said that the interest of persons with disability to be included in national development and to be placed on the national development agenda. Maximum research from developing countries provides ways for rehabilitation methods, but it fails to discuss the rights of persons with disabilities.

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2) Inclusive Education

Research from first world countries has shown that mainstreaming of students with autism is a difficult work. Literature has suggested the factors that need to be taken into consideration while, mainstreaming a child with autism. They include dealing with behaviour of children with autism from work of Perko and McLaughlin; 2002. The ways to socialize them are studied from works of Robertson, Chamberlain and Kasari, 2003. The teaching skills and support from work of Coffey and Obringer, 2004. The right based angles of this research are missing. Maximum reports are based on first world countries. Reports from developing countries are very few. The scenario of a developed and developing countries are different. The situation of a developing country also needed to be highlighted.

Many scholars have given varying opinion about inclusive education of students with autism. In 1971, the studies of Kozoloff demonstrated that students with autism could succeed in typical classrooms on the condition that teachers, curriculum and other components of the learning environment were prepared in specific ways. During the 1980s and 1990s, a number of studies supported the inclusion of children with autism in regular educational settings Egel and Gradel, 1988; Handleman, 1984; Handleman, 1991; Romanczyk, 1986.There are some reports which does not support the view of inclusion. Downing (1996) carried out a qualitative case study on inclusion of students with autism, intellectual impairments and behavioural challenges. He found that the students were not performing on grade level and having difficulty interacting with the society. Mesibov and Shea (1996) proposed that smaller, highly structured learning environments were more suitable for some students with autism. In 2001, a study in Scotland McGregor and Campbell, 2001 revealed that only very few teachers support the view of inclusion.

The importance of policy intervention to make inclusive education possible is discussed in the work of Peters 2003; World Bank 2003.Elan (1999) has described the lack of data on connection between poverty and disability in developing countries. The Ajit K. Dalal, (2010) focus on relation between poverty and disability. The importance of right to education and ways to make it in reality is not discussed. These researches mainly focus on the psychological angle. This suggest the theory of charity model. Nothing is mentioned about making a law, to make it compulsory for school to admit children with autism. This research will try to cover the addressed gaps with effective strategies to deal with the problem.

The movement towards inclusive education has gained momentum in recent years. The key elements in the successful implementation of the policy are the teachers, so their positive response is needed. The movement for 'inclusive education' is part of a broad human rights agenda; many educators have serious reservations about supporting the widespread placement of pupils in mainstream schools. The work of Norwich, 1994 suggested the role of teacher in making inclusive education successful. The existing literatures as Hannah, 1988; Jamieson, 1984; Salvia and Munson, 1986 are conducted in America. The Ajit K. Dalal's, (2010) works from India discuss the psycho-social obstruction which stop active participation of the poor with disability in developmental programmes. The journal focuses on social exclusion, prejudices, stigma and discrimination, together with inaccessible physical environment. In India, very little research has been done to study the inclusive education for children with disability as quoted from the works of Jangria and Mukhopadya, 1991; Jangria and Srinivasan, 1991.The educational framework of India and America are different. So, survey reports on Indian context are necessary to understand the problems of students with autism in India. The literature review from western countries failed to provide adequate methods to deal with the problems of developing countries. This research will be from a developing nation, so will be able to focus the problems of developing countries in a better way.

D. Coping With Autism

1) Teacher's Attitude

Bowman (1986) researched on fourteen nations approximately 1,000 teachers. The report states wide differences in teacher opinions regarding integration. The countries surveyed were Egypt, Jordan, Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela, Botswana, Senegal, Zambia, Australia, Thailand, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Norway and Portugal. The teachers were found to favour different types of children for integration into ordinary classes. Interestingly, Bowman noted that in countries which had a law requiring integration, teachers expressed more favourable views (ranging from 47 to 93 per cent). Teachers from countries which offered the most sophisticated segregated educational provision were less supportive to integration (ranging from 0 to 28 per cent). Grol (2000) has carried out a study in Botswana, Kenya, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. The research indicates that programmes in the area of special educational needs are not represented properly. Research indicates that Saharan countries lack training programs for teachers of special needs Enon, 1997; Kisanji, 1996; Peresuh, Adenigba & Ogonda, 1997. Dr. John Charema states that documented literature on the context of economic, cultural and political development is thin and sparse from developing countries. The research on inclusive education for children with autism will try to provide a valuable contribution to the gap in literature review from developing countries.

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Leyser, Kapperman and Keller (1994) undertook a cross-cultural study of teacher attitudes towards integration in the USA, Germany, Israel, Ghana, Taiwan and the Philippines. Their findings showed that there were differences in attitude to integration between these countries. Teachers in the USA and Germany had the most positive attitudes. The view of German teachers was remarkable. At the time of the work, the Germans did not have any special legislation. Teachers were not provided any special education training. But still the teachers were friendly towards the children with autism. This finding goes against a simple relationship between legislative system and inclusive attitudes as Bowman's study had suggested. The authors speculate that the positive views expressed by the German teachers represented an overall sensitivity of Germans towards minorities and, thus, towards persons with disabilities. Teacher attitudes were significantly less positive in Ghana, the Philippines, Israel and Taiwan. There is difference within attitude of teachers in developed and developing countries. Developed countries are teachers friendlier than developing countries as evident from literature. The authors reasoned that this could probably be due to limited or non-existent training for teachers to acquire integration competencies and the limited opportunities for integration in some of these countries.

Center and Ward's (1987) report about Australia study regular teachers indicated that they support integration but are not ready to provide extra attention to the children of special needs. A study conducted in United Kingdom by Clough and Lindsay (1991), investigating the attitudes of 584 teachers towards integration and to different kinds of support, revealed a wider positive view of integration. Their research provided evidence that attitudes had shifted in favour of integrating children. Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) have made 28 surveys on attitude of teachers on inclusive education. They reported that two-thirds (65 per cent) of the teachers surveyed (10,560 in total) agreed with the general concept of integration. The report shows that only 40 percent of teachers believed that this was a realistic goal for most children and responses, again, appeared to vary according to disabling conditions. Another important finding was that there was no correlation between positive attitudes towards inclusion and date of publication, suggesting that teachers' views have not substantially changed over the years. Inclusive education needs a basic level of policy. But very few researches are conducted on the right to education for children with disabilities. Without research exact statistics person with disabilities attending cannot be traced. It is evident from literature review that there are gaps in data, this makes difficult it for planning the strategies. This problem can only be solved by conducting research and establishing research centers.

Brohier, (1995) Kisanji, (1995) McConkey and O'Toole, (1995) says that in developing countries special needs provision is not be a priority of government policy and they do not like spend on this issues even. Fisher & Kennedy, 2001 report states that expenditure on education of persons with disabilities is met by non-governmental organizations. The research by Kristensen and Kristensen (1997) in Uganda and another by Kisanji (1995) in Tanzania, give a report on status on inclusive education in developing countries. The reports states that children with disabilities when included in normal school are not provided with adequate facilities. The work on Zambia by Katwishi (1988) indicates that there were no special educators in most mainstream schools. Charema (1990) works states problem of children with hearing impairments in mainstream schools. It said that the students had hearing aids which had no batteries, or cords, some speech trainers were not working, and even spare parts of the device were not available. The literature reviews from developing countries mainly focus the problems of children with physical disabilities but very less material is available on problems of children with learning disabilities. So, the of rights of children with learning disabilities need to be researched.

2) School Officials

The finding in the Sebastian and Mathot Buckner's (1998) case study of a senior high school in Washington School District, Utah, where students with severe learning difficulties had been integrated give a view of successful inclusion. In this study, twenty educators were interviewed at the beginning and end of the school year to determine attitudes about inclusion. The educators felt that inclusion was working well. The teacher had said that society act as a barrier for inclusion. So, they feel society should be more aware of the problem. Similar findings were reported by Le Roy and Simpson (1996) who studied the impact of inclusion over a three-year period in the state of Michigan(U.S.A).

Studies from Australia conducted by Center and Ward, 1987, have given a report on attitude of teachers towards inclusive education. His report suggested that head teacher accept inclusion more easily than junior teachers. Works of Bochner and Pieterse, 1989, has demonstrated that pre-school administrators have a positive view towards inclusion. It is seen in literature the attitude towards inclusive education varies with degree of disability. Schools are willing to accept students with less disability than those students who have severe disability. Other studies have indicated that school district staffs, such as administrators and advisers, express more positive attitudes to integration than those closer to students, as the class teachers. Head teachers have been found to hold most positive attitudes to integration, followed by special education teachers, with classroom teachers having the most negative

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attitudes (Garvar-Pinhas and Schmelkin, 1989; Norwich, 1994). In the literature nothing is mentioned about making it compulsory for schools to provide the adequate facilities for students with autism. Kala Parasuram (2006) research was conducted in Mumbai in India. It focuses on the income level, gender, sex and level of teaching experience etc of teachers. It discusses the attitudes towards inclusion of students with disabilities into regular schools. But in this research the problem of student having intellectual disabilities is not addressed. It also fails to discuss the negative attitudes of teachers. This research will address these gaps.

3) Attitude of Peer Group

The question of integration of children with autism into educational settings with normal children came into light from the work of Russo and Koegel, 1977. As more children with autism were being placed into the "educational mainstream," an important consideration is whether or not the persons without disabilities (peers) in the classroom can serve as role models for appropriate behaviour. Extensive work by a number of investigators examining observational learning has demonstrated that peer models for normal children have effected change in a variety of behaviours. These behaviours have included sharing (Elliot and Vasta, 1970; Hartup and Coates, 1967); Igelmo, 1976;self-reinforcement (Bandura and Kupers, 1964); problem-solving (Clark, 1965; Debus, 1970; Ridberg, Parke, and Hetherington, 1971); and emotional behaviours (Bandura, Grusec,and Menlove, 1967; Bandura and Menlove,1968).

Studies have been conducted that systematically examine observational learning with children with autism. For example, Coleman and Stedman (1974) described a case history in which a normal peer seemed to serve as a model to modify voice loudness and increase the vocabulary of children with autism. Other studies, however, suggested that such positive benefits may not be possible for all children with autism. In a systematic assessment of observational learning with fifteen children with autism Varni, Lovaas, Koegel, and Everett (1979) found that very low functioning children with autism acquired only a small portion of the benefit from mainstreaming with normal peer group. The study suggested that there is a possibility that problem may be less severe for higher level children with autism. In view of the above studies, it seemed reasonable that at least some children with autism should be able to benefit from exposure to normal peer models. This suggests that it may be important to consider integrating at least some children with autism into classrooms with non autistic peers. Christoplos (1973) and by Dunlap et al. (1979), Russo and Koegel (1977) report suggest that integration is possible for many children with autism.

In developing countries corruption and power to rule prevent to provide the basic framework for inclusive education as said by Grol 2000. In Asia, Kholi (1993) reports that in developing countries institutional facilities are inadequate. In developing countries, research is lacking on the attitude of peer group. The parents of children without disability prefer to keep their children away from children with disabilities. So, the area of peer attitude needs to be researched. This will help in generation of awareness among common people.

4) Attitude of Parents

The works of (Jindal-Snape, Douglas, Topping, and Kerr & Smith) give an idea of parents and teachers attitudes about educating children with autism. The parents want the teachers to be trained properly to handle the students with special needs. The parents feel that teacher trained with special education is needed for successful inclusion. The staff training and curriculum plays a fundamental role in providing successful inclusion (Jindal-Snape et al., 2005). (DfEE,1994) states that different parents have different perspective about inclusive education. The view of parents is very important in making inclusive education successful. The parents have final say on students' education. The views of parents and professionals will effect inclusive education. In literature the procedure to spread awareness to make mainstream education possible is not discussed. This research will try to increase awareness by conducting surveys. The research will also discuss in details the importance of inclusive education which will, help to student ratio in mainstream schools.

E. Legislation

The National Trust Act 1999 is the only Act in India which mentions the term autism. Nothing is mentioned in this Act about the educational policy or provision to make such people self sufficient. This Act is charity based. No provision is made in the Act to include the children with autism in the mainstream society. The provision of guardianship and some monetary schemes as grant are only discussed in the Act. The Persons with Disabilities Act 1995 does not mention anything about the needs of children of learning disability. Canada and other developed countries have recognized the rights of persons with disabilities to participate fully in the economic and civic life of our communities. But that approach is still missing in India. In India, there is absence of research work.

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Teachers, although positive towards the general philosophy of inclusive education, do not share a 'total inclusion' approach. Instead, they hold differing attitudes about school placements, based largely upon the nature of the students' disabilities. Teachers are more willing to include students with mild disabilities or physical/sensory impairments than students with more complex needs. Even though a lot of work is done on peer group attitude towards disability but still a negative attitude among the peer group is visualized till now. They mainly have to leave a secluded life staying in home, away from the society. The laws are not adequate to cater the needs of children with autism. There is need of new policy and awareness among the people about autism. Very few researches are done from India on rights of children with autism. . So the area of right to inclusive education of children with autism needs to be researched.

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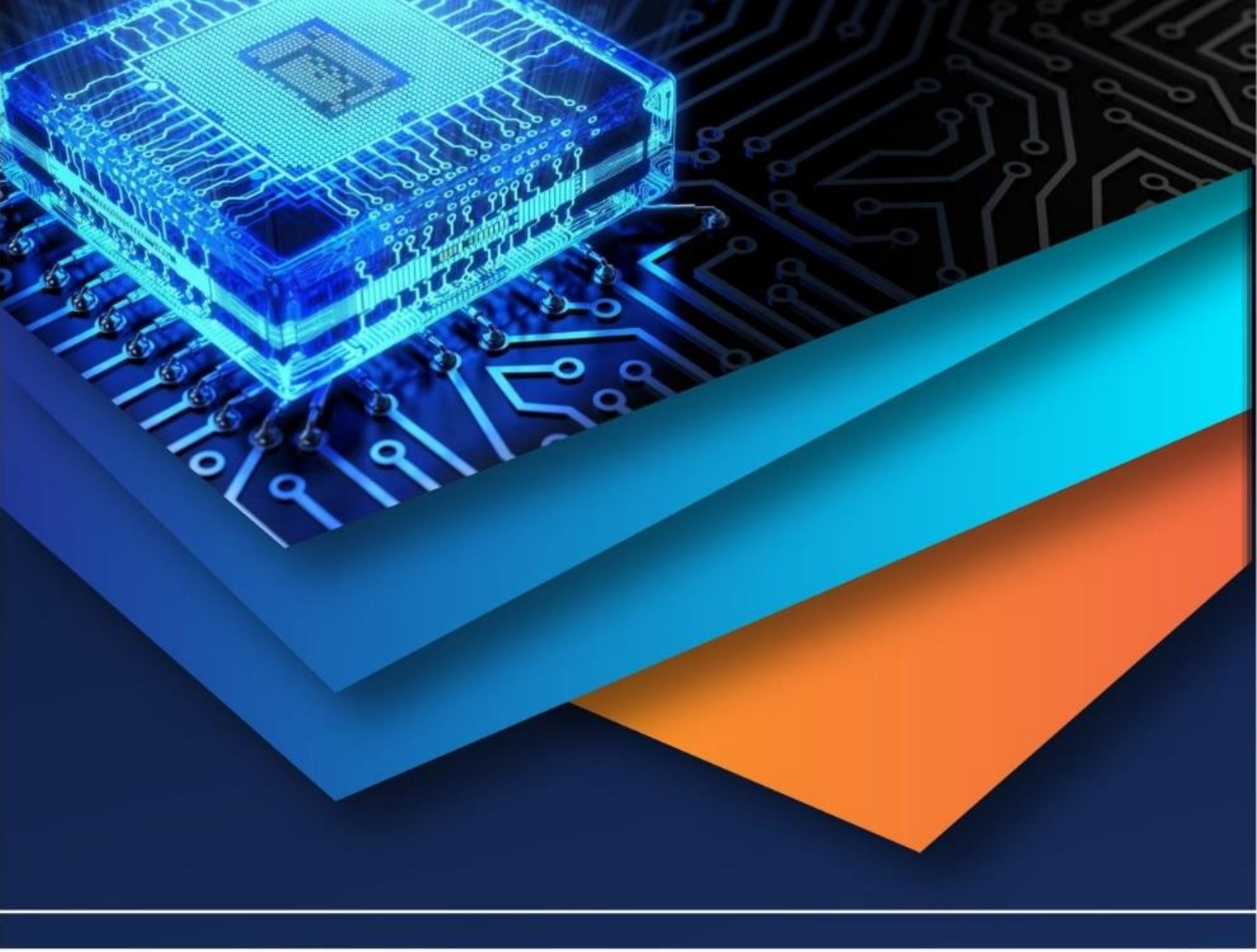
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