

6. Evaluation of the Implementation of the Scheme-Inclusive Education of the Disabled at the Secondary Stage (IEDSS) in India

1	Theme/Subject:	Inclusive Education
2	Stage of Education:	Secondary Stage
3	Topic of Research:	Evaluation of the Implementation of the Scheme IEDSS in India
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6	Category:	Research project
7	Language of Research Report:	English
8	Year of Completion:	2013
9	Published/Unpublished :	Published in 2014

ABSTRACT

The 'Inclusive Education of the Disabled at the Secondary Stage' (IEDSS) was launched in the year 2009 as a revised form of the earlier scheme 'Integrated Education for the Disabled Children (IEDC) which was introduced in 1970's. The IEDSS scheme provided an opportunity to all students with disabilities who have completed eight years of elementary schooling to complete four years of secondary schooling (classes IX to XII) in an inclusive and enabling environment. The Scheme had been implemented in a number of States since 2009 on the basis of 100% Central Assistance. An attempt has been made to evaluate the implementation of the Scheme-IEDSS in different States and Union Territories of India. The major objectives of the study were to assess the current impact of the scheme on enrolment, access, retention of students with disabilities at the secondary and higher secondary stage, accessibility of resource support, to identify good practices and to assess the role of State Governments in planning, implementation and monitoring of the scheme. The data for the study was collected from 27 States/UTs where the IEDSS scheme was being implemented after the approval of the proposals by the MHRD. Explorative and descriptive research design was used to explore the status of implementation of IEDSS-Scheme in different states and to analyze the issues and challenges faced by the states in proper implementation of this scheme. In order to meet study objectives, multi-stage simple random sampling design was followed for selection of districts from respective states, schools, teachers and students. Data was collected from 203 teachers and 278 students selected through simple random sampling technique. The study team made visits to the concerned States/UTs and interacted with the IEDSS coordinators/administrators, principals/heads of the schools, teachers, students with disabilities and their parents. Tools were prepared by the research team with the help of experts and on the basis of the feedback from the visits of various states. The self-designed tools, namely, a) State Information Blank b) Teacher Interaction Schedule; c) Students Interaction Schedule and d) Classroom Observation

Schedule were the research tools used in this study. Items in the tools were mainly related to enrolment, access, retention of students with disabilities, accessibility of resource support, TLMs and teachers, students, items related to infrastructure, number of teachers and their specialization, teaching-learning process, assessment, training of teachers, learning of students etc. Both qualitative and quantitative analysis of data was carried out. Descriptive procedure was followed for quantitative analysis of data, presented in percentage. Major findings revealed that out of 35 States/UTs, Only 16 States/UTs started implementation of IEDSS in 2009-10, while 7 States/UTs started it in 2010-11 and 4 States/UTs started it in 2011-12. Eight States/UTs, namely Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Goa, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand and Lakshadweep had still not implemented IEDSS. Enrolment has increased in 11 States from 2009-10 to 2011-12. The enrolment of girl students with disabilities is 43.57% in 2009-10, 43.07% in 2010-11, 41.51% in 2011-12, and 40.21% in 2012-13. The major reasons stated for dropping out were shortage of special teachers in the States, disturbances in Maoist affected and tribal areas, poverty and social stigmas attached to disability, lack of modified/adapted curriculum, lack of awareness and sensitization, absence of secondary schools in the neighborhood especially for girls; absence of basic infrastructural and other facilities in school; and absence of linkage between different inclusive schemes/interventions, between different departments and between school and vocational education. There was a need to address the gap between the students passing out of elementary classes and enrolling in secondary schools. Low enrolment of girl students was a serious concern at this level of education. The implications of this study on the respective states were to address the wide gap between policy provisions and actual utilization of these provisions through interventions at ground level. States could initiate or adopt strategies for taking different measures like sensitization of stakeholders on better understanding of Inclusion and bring out positive attitudes towards inclusion, inter and intra departments collaborations for providing better administrative, infrastructural, human resource, therapeutic and other support services as per IEDSS Scheme and training of teachers.