

## **INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN HYDERABAD**

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### **Abstract:**

Hyderabad is a metro city where a large number of MNCs, corporate companies, top institutions etc. are housed; where skyscrapers and plush multiplexes have come up in large numbers; where roads are flooded with high-end SUVs at any time, during day or night; where every kind of luxury is made available for its seekers. This is one side of the reality; the other side a contrast brews that glares and triggers 'the thoughtful minds and seeing eyes'. The underdeveloped slum areas are still in the clutches of poverty, where they no longer believe in the system but destiny. Poor girls are still sold to the Arabs and others who consider Hyderabad a market for their needed 'commodity'. Statistics show that the gap that exists in the economic status of the people of Hyderabad is due to the ignorance and lack of proper exposure and education among the lower middle class. This problem attains gargantuan proportion if there is a differently abled child in the family. In this kind of situation there is a need to create awareness and mobilise people towards implementing inclusive education. Implementation of IE will better the situation and bring a gradual transformation by reducing existing wide void. The inequality can be removed to bring a stable economic and societal structure in the city. To realise the concept of inclusive education there are challenges that academic institutions and the education sector has to overcome. Thus the objective of this paper is to examine the challenges of inclusive education in any metro city in general and Hyderabad in particular.

### **Introduction**

India witnessed consistent economic growth in the last two and half decades particularly in the post-reform period. However, the problem of inequality could not be addressed by the government programs and strategies. Though the outcomes of economic reforms in the last 15 years indicate that there have been improvements in economic growth, foreign exchange, IT revolution, export growth etc, the income distribution has been unequal and only some sections of the population have benefited more from it. The problems of socio-economic inequality in India are more severe in the metro cities; and, Hyderabad remains a classic example.

### **Extreme economic inequality in Hyderabad**

The city of Hyderabad, a cosmopolitan hub, is ever-growing with investments from Multinational companies. After the state bifurcation, the primary aim of the government was to retain, strengthen and accelerate the existing economic growth, which indirectly widened the economic gap; and, as a consequence, equal distribution of assets and opportunities was left unresolved. There were some ad-hoc schemes to render support to ease the situation but concrete action plans and efforts for eradication of extreme economic inequality were not initiated.

### **The Royal Fervour**

Contrary to common perception, the lifestyle of elite business class in large metro cities of India is exceptionally like that of a fairyland. Similarly, in the city of Hyderabad, where just the last few years have seen a 45% rise in multi-millionaires with a net worth of over \$30 million, such luxury homes are in great demand. One can witness, while driving through 'posh' areas, designer homes built by global architects with ultra-luxurious fittings, lightings, security systems; complexes with their own ecosystem of private cinema halls, fitness centres salon and spa, banquet halls and kids gaming zones. Being a city that is in the forefront of business and IT, yet with a comparatively relaxed pace of life, little wonder an increasing influx of people from other states are making Hyderabad their home. Thus living it up in style, in the city of Nizams, there are some who still lead the live of royal fervour like the Nizams!

### **Challenges to the Implementation of IE**

In these circumstances, though the government is promoting opportunities to ensure broad based participation by all sections of the society; inclusive growth or equitable development has been missing. It is like running a train with AC coaches and special bogies sans sleeper or passenger class. Important elements of inclusive growth are agricultural growth, employment generation and poverty reduction, social equality in health and education sectors and reduction in economic and other disparities. But there is an unfathomable void between the life of the affluent and the poor in Hyderabad. Low agricultural growth with increasing numbers in farmers' suicides, lack of employment opportunities, inadequate resources for the development of women and children, poverty and low human development, both geographically and in terms of social categories, lead to the increase in rural urban divides and regional disparities. However, there is some awakening due to the promotion of inclusive education through SDGs; and, 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan that advocated faster and more inclusive growth.

### **Common misunderstandings regarding inclusion**

Before exploring the means and viability of inclusive education in Hyderabad, let us examine briefly, relevant aspects of Inclusive Education policy. There seems to be a lot of confusion and misinformation about what inclusion actually means. Common misunderstandings of inclusion relate to considering integration and inclusion to be synonymous. Here, inclusion is

viewed as simply the presence of a child who is labeled “disabled” or “differently able” in a typical setting. This view supports the belief that inclusion is only about some people, and not about everyone; and it perceives inclusion as a process of assimilation.

### **Challenges of Inclusion Education in Hyderabad**

With its challenges IE requires not only special educators but also entire school staff to work together with a joint concern for the sake of fuller realization of inclusive education. Thus, the government should initiate reforms with the goal to welcome all diversities such as gender, nationality, culture, language, academic achievements, and disabilities. So that essence of inclusion becomes integral part of humanism, which argues that all forms of segregation contradict universal moral values. IE should be embraced as a leading idea by the educational institutions, academic bodies, policy makers and all other stakeholders. This should result in inspiring them to initiate projects to transform cultures and procedures in the education system.

### **Barriers in implementing IE in Hyderabad**

Any significant innovation will encounter several barriers. The city of Hyderabad has encountered, primarily, the following four categories of barriers.

- **Value barriers**

Affluent Hyderabadis regard value differences as varying relationships to the culture. The fact is that most educational innovations face the problem of value differences. In majority of cases, children hailing from very poor and underprivileged sections of the city lack the sophistication that the rich have been exposed to. This diversity of values can appear as a concern when inclusive education. This is perceived as radical change and might trigger concern among parents and teachers who can possibly hesitate to welcome this innovation.

- **Superiority Complex**

Parents belonging to creamy section of Hyderabad who still identify themselves as the descendants of the royal family do not appreciate the concept of IE. The feeling of being superior creates a class barrier for accepting the policy of Inclusive Education.

- **Ambitious Power Conscious Class**

High rung bureaucrats and business class families never accept their children studying with the poor and underprivileged. They have a fixed opinion that the lower middle class and poor family children lack the drive to achieve success. Lower strata families are considered lazy and complacent.

- **Practical barriers**

Practical barriers are of more physical nature which appears in the form of time, resources and system barriers. Practical barriers may be of special interest in relation to innovations since these factors have often been shown to slow down changes (Skogen, 2001). These kinds of barriers become a serious concern for IE because with its innovative design IE needs time to be adapted to education system.

- **System Barriers**

For the smooth implementation of the concept of IE, the school system and set up has to be highly trained and organised. Teacher trainings, curriculum adaptation and relevant teaching materials should be in place.

- **Psychological barriers**

Sometimes people resist changes even when these changes do not challenge their values and there is not serious practical problem. This resistance simply comes from a psychological barrier (Dalin, 1978). In the case of IE, psychological barrier may become problematic issue of specific nature because it is rather abstract phenomena and it requires professional treatment.

Lack of understanding of what inclusion is, and subsequent unwarranted fear of inclusion, are also significant barriers. Thus there is a need to create awareness and sensitize Hyderabadis that the wide socio-economic gap is the root cause of many evils. The government bodies, including educational institutional authorities, should participate to formulate citizen centric policies that promote equality. It is also the moral obligation of NGOs not only to garner support system for the poor and underprivileged but also to initiate steps to annihilate the diversity. The Multi National Companies and IT sector should also join the cause as their corporate social responsibility. The onus is on the parents and system. Only their cooperation can make the implementation of IE a reality in Hyderabad. There is a distinctly declared agreement that all children, regardless of their race, gender, nationality, disability and etc. have the right to transform their lives and education is the most potent tool for such transformation. To achieve quality education for all, it is very essential that sound policies are framed. It is not complete exercise if detailed implementation plans are not prepared.

Each Hyderabadis should be apprised of the rich cultural heritage associated with the city of Nizams. They should appreciate the magnanimity of the great rulers of Hyderabad. These are the ways to elicit willing cooperation from the elite sections. They should also be informed that equal education to all the children will strengthen the future prospects of the city in terms of GDP and FDI.

### **Conclusion**

This paper tried to define main points which are described as vital aspects of inclusive education in Hyderabad. Though detailed discussion of the teaching methods and theories is not presented; but, as per the scope of the paper, references are sighted and key aspects to be adopted are outlined, highlighting the concept of social interaction. The challenges of IE are reviewed in the context of innovations in education and barriers preventing these innovations. Moreover, this paper includes the roles and responsibilities of a classroom teacher, collaboration, and curriculum adaptation. Though the elements are just not exhaustive; they are very important points for successful inclusive education in Hyderabad, if not all metro cities. It is asserted in this study that promoting inclusive education is essential for uniform

economic development in metros like Hyderabad. The concept of inclusion has contributed a lot to the teaching and learning practice as well as theoretical and practical experience of schools. However, all these blessings have not appeared ready in a moment. The study of inclusive education experience of some countries, which have quite sophisticated inclusion, apparently indicates that the satisfactory results of inclusion turned out only after decisive reforms and innovations.

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