

# **To Understand Inclusion We Must First Examine the Causes of Exclusion**

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In standing here today before such a learned and committed audience of professionals, I am particularly mindful of the limited time allotted to present this paper and the need to be clear about what it is I hope to achieve during this presentation. The theme of this conference; *“Challenging Exclusion”* can be interpreted in two ways, depending on where and how syllables are stressed. On the one hand we may read this title as a call to challenge those factors which lead to the exclusion of individuals and groups within our various societies, but we may also regard the same two words as a recognition that the nature of exclusion presents us with challenges and difficulties in respect of the ways in which we conduct ourselves professionally and maybe personally. However, I like the dual nature of the conference title and because of this I will endeavour to give some consideration to both of these interpretations as I proceed with this paper.

Over the past few days we have had an opportunity to listen to and discuss some excellent papers and presentations at this conference. Some based upon secure empirical studies that have attempted to provide insights into the lives of children and families who have been marginalised within their communities, and others that have expressed with some passion a series of beliefs about the current situation confronting policy makers, educators, families and others who are concerned to address the injustices that they see on a daily basis. In being given the task to present a paper which attempts to draw some of these major themes together I find myself daunted by the prospect of trying to summarise issues whilst presenting ideas which may add to or even question some of what I have heard. It is as a result of this situation that I have chosen to consider both the challenges of exclusion and the ways in which we may confront obstacles by following a staged pathway. It is therefore

my intention in presenting this paper to construct an argument that begins with a personal reflection and to follow this with a discussion of those historical influences that have led us through periods of increased awareness to resistance and activism, and eventually to recognition of the need for action based upon research. The early stages of this paper may present a critical and seemingly pessimistic overview, but rest assured that in the final stage of this session I will adopt a more celebratory and positive tone which suggests that it is possible through our joint efforts to challenge exclusion and create a more inclusive and equitable society.

It is inevitable that anything which I say today is based upon my own experience, my interpretation of what I have read and seen and the opinions of those who I respect, many of whom I have been privileged to work with throughout a career that spans more than forty years. I am aware that much of what I intend to say can be challenged or interpreted differently by others whose experiences, reading and opinions may differ substantially from my own. I am also aware that there are some, possibly many who will disagree fundamentally with some of the premises that I will make. However, I hope that even some of those who hold views that are diametrically opposed to my own might agree that it is only when issues are confronted and debated that we have an opportunity to learn and thus move forward.

So, let me begin with the personal. When I left my childhood home in the 1970s to begin student life in the city of Bristol in the south west of England, I immediately ceased shaving. In those days long hair and beards were *de rigueur* amongst the student population, especially with those who wished to cultivate a pseudo-intellectual persona. Whilst the flowing locks of my youth have long since deserted me, I have not allowed a razor anywhere near my face since those heady student days. I relate this information not as any kind of fashion statement; those who know me well will be the first to suggest that sartorial elegance is not my forte, but rather as a lead in to the topic of mirrors; which is something you may not have been expecting me to talk about in this session, but please have patience and I hope that all will become clear.

I rather assume that men who shave on a daily basis spend a certain amount of time each morning looking into a mirror, mainly I presume to ensure that all potentially offending

stubble has been removed from their faces. In so doing they reaffirm their relationship with the figure staring back at them from the mirror and presumably derive satisfaction from the achievement gained through competent personal grooming. This ritual also provides an opportunity to reacquaint oneself with an image with which one may have become relatively comfortable, but which we know will slowly change over time as we age. This staring into a mirror can I suppose be a source of some re-assurance in providing evidence that the ravages of time have not yet done too much damage. Though in the case of the more vain members of the male community, it could just possibly have the opposite effect, leaving them with deflated egos and a descent into a trough of despond.

The above introduction to what is supposed to be an academic paper may already have left some colleagues bewildered. This being the case I will move more quickly to make my point. I would suggest that for all of us, when we do take the time to gaze into a mirror, what we see is exactly what we expect; what we might term the “*norm*”. There is something quite reassuring about the familiar image, a certain comfort to be gained from the expected. This being the case, when we see the well-known image staring back at us, we are confident that all is well and that equilibrium is assured. But what would happen if this wasn’t the case. I’m about to take you into the realm of fiction and fantasy, using the kind of imagery that was created by the great Czech novelist Franz Kafka who in his short story *Metamorphosis* gave us the character of Gregor Samsa, who you may recall awoke one morning to discover that he had turned into an insect. Let’s just imagine for a moment that today on entering the bathroom you catch a glimpse of yourself in the mirror and that the image that you see is not at all what you were expecting. What would you think if your familiar reflection was replaced by an image with a different coloured skin, someone of a different sex, or an individual with an obvious disability? How shocked might you be? I suspect that your reaction would depend upon a number of details.

Let us suppose for example, that the image looking back at you was obviously still you, but maybe a younger version, perhaps with a few less worry lines, fewer bags beneath your eyes. Then you may well see this as a positive start to your day. The image wasn’t quite what you had expected, but you can certainly live with this changed, younger looking self. You have veered away from the “*norm*”, but in its place you have a new and positive image. You may well go forward into the day with an extra spring in your step.

Now let's assume something different. This time let us contemplate a situation in which the mirror reveals a much older looking you. You have put on weight, your hair is grey, your skin tone is dull and you look twenty years older than your true self. Or let's take this idea further so that this time your reflection is of someone with Down syndrome, with those tell-tale epicanthic folds around the eyes, or maybe a different image of an individual with hair covered by a hijab and the face concealed with a veil, or a face covered in tattoos or tribal markings. This is certainly not what you had expected, this is not the "norm" and because of this you have a mixture of emotions. How might we describe these? Confused, alarmed, anxious, horrified, disbelieving? Each one of these reactions would be understandable, because the further we are removed from the "norm" the less comfortable we begin to feel.

Throughout history notions of perfection or perfectibility have played a significant part in the lives of individuals and communities of people. In Europe during a period that has come to be known as the renaissance, during which the ancient Greek and Roman ideas of beauty and aesthetics were revived, this enabled both men and women to assess their own physical being against a supposedly ideal model. In England at this time a law was passed in order that budget holders could discriminate between *the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor*. This allowed officials to make decisions with regards to the giving of charity or alms. Specifically mention was made within this law to those who we would today recognise as having a disability. Such individuals, having bodies far removed from the Roman Adonis were singled out as being undesirable, potentially dangerous and a drain on the economy of the state. Those who were wealthy enough applied every means at their disposal to create a personal appearance which meant that when they looked in their mirrors they themselves were as close to the Renaissance ideal as was possible. Perhaps before we suggest such vanity indicated that many people of this period were self-obsessed and narrowly focused upon a false aesthetic, we might reflect on the fact that in 2003 analysts at Goldman Sachs estimate that the global beauty industry which was then valued at around 95 billion US dollars was growing at around 7% per year, more than twice the rate of the developed world's GDP.

Throughout history the way in which we have generally dealt with those who we perceive to be dangerous or a challenge to the aesthetics of the state, is to lock them away and exclude them from our communities. It was still fairly common until recently to accept that those who we would now describe as having severe mental illnesses and even some with complex

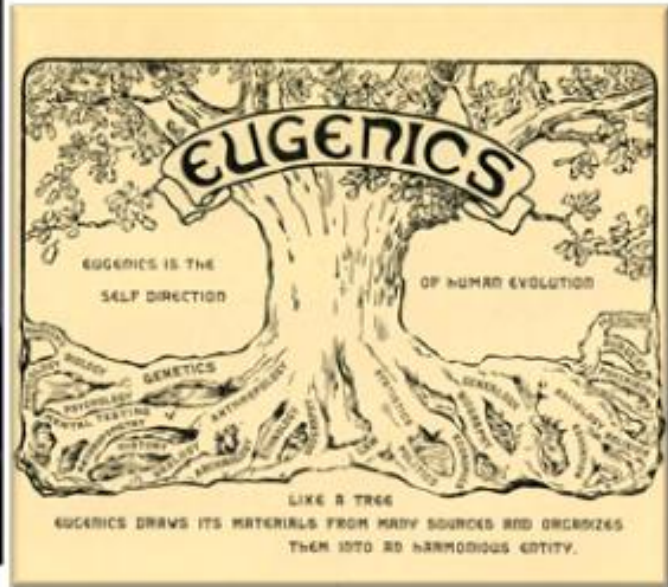
disabilities should be housed in confinement, either for their own safety, or for that of the general public. Perhaps an extreme example of this approach could be seen at Bicêtre in Paris, or at Bethlem Hospital (better known as Bedlam) in London, where those described as “mad” were encouraged to perform tricks for a paying public in the first half of the nineteenth century (Foucault 1997; Chambers 2009). The records from those institutes reveal that many of the inmates of these terrifying establishments, far from being mad were suffering from a range of disabilities, which were not only beyond medical understanding, but also failed to attract genuine scientific inquiry. It is a sad reflection that in England the barbaric practices which included baiting of bears, cock fighting and dog fighting were banned by law in 1835\* at a time when it was still not unusual for the French and English public to seek entertainment from the mistreatment of their fellow human beings incarcerated in a range of institutions.

Coming forward to the end of the nineteenth century, in 1883 Sir Francis Galton published his book on *“Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development”* in which he discussed his theories that led to the founding of the eugenics movement. This followed an article published by Galton in 1873 in which he outlined his theory of *“hereditary improvement”* through which he aimed to create a eugenic ‘Utopia,’ in which the genetically superior (amongst whom he of course numbered himself) would be encouraged to live lives separated from the rest of mankind and afforded every opportunity to establish their dominant place in society. Those considered to be from a genetic underclass would be expected to refrain from procreating, and might even be incarcerated as *‘enemies of the State’* should they challenge this rule.

When I look in the mirror do I see someone whose contribution to the gene pool might be regarded as positive, or might I find myself labelled as a potential *“enemy of the state?”* A question which was of course, much more elegantly put by George Orwell in his dystopic novel *Nineteen Eighty Four*.



**Sir Francis Galton**  
**1822 - 1911**



Whilst the past few minutes of this presentation might have sounded like little more than the precis of a history lesson, let us not forget that it was theories such as those propounded by Sir Francis Galton that encouraged the Nazis to pursue their programme of ethnic cleansing in the mid-twentieth century (Dwork 1991; Klemperer 2003). The holocaust is largely remembered today for the persecution and mass extermination of Jewish people, and it was most certainly the Jewish population that suffered more than any other at the hands of Hitler and his henchmen. However, it is too easy to forget that amongst the many millions who died in the gas chambers or simply from the hardships of forced labour in the concentration camps, there were significant numbers from other groups including Gypsy Roma and those with disabilities (Levi 1947; Burleigh 1994). The justification used for these acts of barbarity was that these were inferior beings far removed from the ideals associated with an Aryan master race. In other words an extreme form of forced eugenics.

## Number of Deaths in Nazi Concentration Camps

**Jews:** approximately 6 million

**Soviet civilians:** around 7 million (including 1.3 Soviet Jewish civilians, who are included in the 6 million figure for Jews)

**Soviet prisoners of war:** approximately 3 million

**Non-Jewish Polish civilians:** approximately 1.8 million

**Serb civilians:** approximately 312,000

**People with disabilities:** approximately 250,000

**Roma (Gypsies):** 196,000–220,000

**Jehovah's Witnesses:** approximately 1,900

It is important that we do not fall into the trap of believing that genetic selection has been confined to the history books. It seems ever more likely that we are entering a new phase of what have been termed “*designer babies*” whereby those parents who can afford access to advanced medical treatment may be able to determine not only the sex of their unborn child, but also undergo the kind of genetic screening and modification that will influence personality traits and physical attributes. Those who feel that this is an image from science fiction are advised to read the works of eminent medical researchers such as Professor Julian Savulescu who use the term “*human enhancement*” when proposing a process of genetic selection (Savulescu 2011).

Before I move on from this historical context let me remind you of the words of the Spanish philosopher and essayist George Santayana whose prescient phrase “*Those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it*” continues to have a ring of truth. Indeed I would suggest that we live today in a world that, if not totally ignorant of history, appears content to endorse many of the barbaric practices that have led to the marginalisation and in many instances outright persecution of people who are “*not like ourselves*”. I would contend that it is through a process of singling out others as being different from ourselves and

recognising them only through a collective label, such a Rohingya, Australian Aboriginal, American Indian, Gond, Gypsy Traveller, disabled, or Shudra that the process of exclusion often begins.

There is, of course another much more positive side of history that is of particular relevance to those of us gathered here today. This has been variously described as the history of resistance or the history of activism. We are fortunate to live in societies where whenever injustice is encountered there are individuals who are prepared to stand up and challenge these. Here in India the names of Ambedkar (2011), Nagaraj (2010; 2012) and Elwin (1939; 1943) are often evoked for their contribution in fighting for the rights of marginalised peoples. If we turn our attentions specifically to the case of persons with disabilities today in this country, we can observe how individual activists, often motivated by personal circumstances have co-ordinated actions on behalf of the most vulnerable members of society. As an example of the impact of such activism, we can see how the determination of Mithu Alur in Mumbai to ensure that families of children with disabilities have access to appropriate welfare, education and employment opportunities was greatly motivated by her own parental experiences. Through her work many thousands of young people and their families have gained access to schooling and the kind of support that was beyond the imagination of previous generations. I could equally cite the campaigning zeal of many others including Professor Jayanthi Narayan who is present at this conference or Mrs Rukmini Krishnaswamy in Bangalore who have devoted a lifetime's work fighting for the benefit of those who have been denied their rights to education. I am equally aware that there are many others here present in this room who on a daily basis are working hard to improve the situation for those in their charge, including colleagues with whom I have been fortunate to work and several students from whom I continue to learn.

Such individuals, and the organisations that they have founded and with whom they continue to work, and I would include here the National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities who are hosting this conference, continue to play a leading and critical role in challenging exclusion. The American writer Susan Sontag acknowledges the vital role played by individuals and groups who challenge current iniquities when she urges:



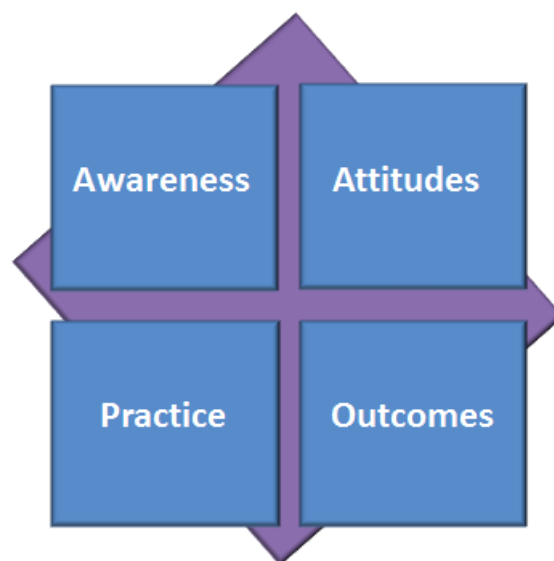
*“Let’s say the principle is: it’s wrong to oppress and humiliate a whole people. To deprive them systematically of lodging and proper nutrition; to destroy their habitations, means of livelihood, access to education and medical care, and ability to consort with one another.”*

(Sontag 2007).

By being here today at this conference you are making a statement which affirms a belief that we do need to challenge exclusion. However, simply being in favour of justice does not make it happen, and it is therefore important that for the remainder of this presentation I provide some evidence of how the activities undertaken by you, and by others of similar mind who are not here today, have made a difference to the lives of children and families who have in many instances struggled to gain appropriate access to education and social justice. In particular I wish to focus on the evidence that we have gained through research that demonstrates both the efficacy and the necessity to promote a more inclusive education system that welcomes all learners to participate together in educational institutions regardless of need, ability, race, tribe, class, caste, religion or sex.

In order to achieve this I will consider four themes that have received attention and been the focus of some debate in respect of inclusive education both internationally and here in India. For each of these areas I will raise what I consider to be key questions, but also provide some evidence that the kind of actions that individuals in this room are taking can have an impact and make a significant difference. The four themes which I will consider I have identified as

**Awareness, Attitudes, Practice and Outcomes.**



### Awareness

Awareness of the obstacles to accessing and gaining the benefits of education is a critical starting point if we are to challenge exclusion. I suggest that this needs to be addressed at several levels and is an area in which considerable progress has been made in recent years. In an age of mass media increasing awareness of injustice and inclusion is probably more easily gained than at any time in history. Images of individuals with disabilities, those facing extreme hunger or fleeing from places that they previously called home appear on our television screens, on the pages of newspapers and via social media on a daily basis. There is no excuse for being ignorant about the state of the world's children. Well respected organisations including Unesco, Unicef and the World Bank publish regular reports highlighting both challenges and successes, and the work of individual campaigners for children's rights, including the Nobel Laureates Kailash Satyarthi and Malala Yousafzay are reported in the press and can be followed on Youtube and elsewhere.

Living in the digital era and an age of mass communication has many advantages, though of course we need to exercise extreme caution when we have become over reliant upon what many of us have come to see as "*antisocial media*" as a first port of call for obtaining information. As a means of gaining an immediate overview, sources such as Wikipedia and other platforms can be helpful, but the plethora of mis-information and the abuse of mass communication systems, particularly by those in positions of power and authority, which

has become strikingly common as a means of quelling debate even in supposedly advanced democracies over the past eighteen months, can also be dangerous.

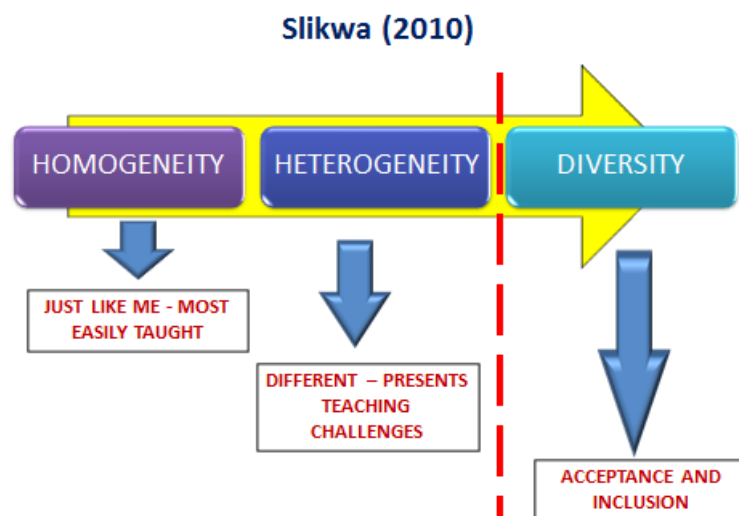
Information and in particular its distribution and emphasis is a critical factor in raising awareness. Indeed it is probably true to say that without the work of pressure groups, parent activists and organisations focused upon the needs of excluded persons such as those with disabilities, we would not have a commitment from National Governments to develop policies for the promotion of inclusion. There can be little doubt that the activities of individuals and organised groups has been one of the greatest influences in the instigation of international agreements and national policies in recent years. Would India today have its Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (Ministry of Human Resource Development 2009), had it not been for the awareness raised by many of the parents, committed professionals and activists such as I see sitting before me at this conference today. I am not suggesting that such policies in themselves will create a more equitable society, but do believe that they are an important step in the right direction, so long as we ensure that politicians and policy makers are held to account for their implementation.

### **Attitudes**

Raising public awareness through creating positive images of people from marginalised groups is an essential factor in breaking down stereotypes and challenging prejudices. However, in some instances attitudes remain entrenched and continue to be an inhibitor of moves towards inclusion. Where negative attitudes persist these normally result from either prejudice or a blend of ignorance and fear. The former of these is very difficult to change, but where inclusion is inhibited by ignorance each one of us in this room has an opportunity and I believe a responsibility to bring about change.

The literature which discusses the attitudes of teachers, parents and peers towards the development of inclusive education both internationally and from research conducted in India is extensive (Duhaney 2012). If we analyse the findings from these studies we find that common factors emerge. The first of these can best be described as a lack of understanding. Teachers in particular express concerns that they do not understand how to address the needs of those children who are given labels, which in themselves suggest that they are going to be difficult. The pathologising of learners with labels that suggest that they are in

some way deficient or likely to prove problematic has been a feature of special education, and I would suggest a limiting factor in efforts to create inclusive classrooms. There is a dominant discourse within education that is centred upon the idea that if we can provide a child with a diagnosis or label this will enable us to be effective in meeting that individual's needs. Slikwa (2010) has proposed that there is a progression of ideas about difference. This he believes runs from homogeneity through heterogeneity to diversity. Homogeneous learners are perceived to be *"just like us"* and therefore easily accepted and taught in mainstream schools, those who are heterogeneous present the teacher with additional challenges and therefore require modification to teaching. Depending upon the complexity of these challenges teachers may, or may not see the learner as being suited for the mainstream classroom. Diversity, Slikwa suggests, demands an acceptance that the human condition, far from being homogeneous comprises a whole gamut of needs, cultures and abilities and that this acceptance is a critical factor if we are to create an education system that is equitable and inclusive.



I will return briefly here to my mirror analogy. In Slikwa's proposal the notion of homogeneity is the one with which we invariably feel most at ease. We would like those who we teach to be a similar to that reflection which we see in the mirror, in the belief that we can understand this image and can therefore feel comfortable in working with individuals who fit this persona. However, when we see something with which we are unfamiliar our first reaction is to focus upon difference, apply a label (this may be disability, tribal, or gypsy for example) and emphasise difficulties before we even begin the teaching

process. In Slikwa's model, the greatest challenge undoubtedly comes between heterogeneity and an acceptance and celebration of diversity. I would suggest that many teachers today are struggling to cross that line, and that if this is the case for teachers, who must surely be leading the way towards inclusive education, it is hardly surprising that many others in society are even further back along Slikwa's line of progression.

It is of course important that we do not apportion blame to teachers or others who find themselves stranded along Slikwa's line of progression. There are legitimate concerns expressed by teachers regarding their lack of preparedness to address the needs of a diverse school population. Returning to the research on attitudes towards inclusive education we can see that second factor of influence is undoubtedly the need for training.

We have in fact seen a significant expansion of training and professional development in the area of special educational needs in recent years. Whilst this has undoubtedly raised awareness and provided a mass of teachers with additional skills, knowledge and understanding, I believe that the nature of much of this training has contributed to a perpetuation of the belief that we are confronted with an insurmountable pedagogical challenge that remains within the remit of specialist teachers, whilst others cannot be expected to succeed. Whilst I know that many of my colleagues are uncomfortable with the notion that special education training is part of the problem, I make no apologies for my belief that a greater focus upon practices which promote equity and inclusion will prepare teachers better, if they are to advance from a focus on heterogeneity to creating effective learning in truly diverse classrooms.

Let me be clear. I am not suggesting that teachers should be denied opportunities to gain additional skills which are specifically aimed at addressing particular populations of learners. It would be foolish to deny that, for example, proficiency in the use of braille for teaching blind children to read, visual structure to assist some children on the autism spectrum, or structured language programmes for those working in their second or third language, have made a tremendous contribution to the learning of often marginalised students. I applaud the professionalism of those teachers who have equipped themselves to deliver such specialist teaching, but I also contend that much of what is seen as specialised should become the norm for all teachers rather than the domain of the special educator.

It is therefore the nature of training that I believe we should be considering. Slee (2010 p. 19) in an astute review of teacher education states that:

*“If teachers are to interrupt the constancy of exclusion they ought to be acquainted with its character and operation. In this respect becoming an inclusive educator requires that they not only acquire disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical skills and inclusive dispositions, but that they know how to identify the manifest and insidious ways in which exclusion is established through and in schooling. In this respect we are all complicit and need to be able to apply the humility to subject ourselves to the practice and not just the rhetoric of reflexivity.”*

Slee writes here not about the specialist teacher, but makes a demand that all teachers gain a greater understanding of those causes of exclusion which are pervasive, and make a commitment to challenge these in all aspects of their professional lives. He proposes that whilst specialist knowledge and pedagogy has an important role to play in promoting inclusion, this alone will not challenge the negative attitudes and low expectations that are critical exclusionary factors within our schooling systems.

There is of course, much that is already known about the conditions and approaches that promote inclusive learning. Many colleagues gathered here at this conference have made significant contributions to our knowledge and understanding in this area. Where such learning is shared we can move forward much more quickly to support populations of learners who have traditionally been excluded. Tim Loreman who has spoken so eloquently on this issue has emphasised the importance of maintaining international dialogue in order that we continue to learn together (Loreman 2008). In stating that *“the journey towards educational reform is likely to be lengthy and challenging”* (Loreman 2008 p. 233), he believes that there is much to be learned from good practice which is being fostered locally and that a sharing of these innovations will be critical in demonstrating that inclusive education can take place here and now. I have argued elsewhere (Rose and Doveston 2015) that there is much good practice in schools here in India and that it is important to build upon this rather than to assume the transferability of approaches from other cultures.

## Practice

Teacher and parent apprehensions about the impact of creating classrooms that provide for a more diverse population must not be ignored. Here I will turn my attention to two specific questions that many of us who advocate for greater inclusion are being regularly asked. The first of these concerns the potential for learners with special educational needs or those from other formerly excluded groups to cause classroom disruption. Will it not be the case that the child on the autism spectrum, or the first generation learner, or the child who does not speak the language of instruction will demand more time from the teacher and be a distraction for other learners? The second question is that which concerns efficacy. Where is the evidence that pupils who have traditionally been taught separately (if at all) will benefit from being taught alongside their “*typically developing*” peers?

It is right that these questions should be asked and I would suggest that whilst we have had a plethora of research investigating attitudes and awareness, increasing our understanding of the impact and efficacy of inclusive practice should now be the major focus for those who wish to understand how the inclusion agenda can be advanced.

Let us take question one and consider those apprehensions which teachers and parents rightly express about the potential for classroom disruption. The obvious answer to this question is yes, children who find classroom environments challenging may well behave in a manner which makes additional demands upon the both the classroom environment and the teacher. Creating inclusive classrooms therefore requires change from the traditional structures and approaches which have dominated schools for so long if we are to avoid such disruption.

There are three essential elements in any teaching process and each of these needs to be carefully considered if we are to promote inclusive practice. These three elements, the teacher, the learner and the environment all require attention, though it seems evident that to date the focus in considering the promotion of inclusion has been almost exclusively upon the learner. This is quite understandable as in any pedagogical process it is the learner who we hope will change through gaining greater proficiency in whichever area it is that they are being instructed.



What might be the major influential factors in respect of the potential for disruption?

Certainly a student who struggles to learn and may also be influenced by the characteristics associated with a condition such as autism spectrum disorder or ADHD has the potential to disrupt. But equally influential may be a limited set of teaching strategies or a classroom environment that exacerbates the challenges experienced by the learner.

Whilst there has been an inadequate focus by researchers upon effective teaching for inclusion and the creation of inclusive learning environments, that which has been conducted has identified a number of factors that should influence our approaches if we wish to provide an equitable education system.

Within the remit of this paper it is not possible to provide a detailed overview of much of the research conducted in this area, but I can at least point us in the direction of significant work that has demonstrated how we can ensure that all learners benefit from being in inclusive classrooms. This is best achieved by looking at the two elements of teaching and environment and those approaches known to yield positive results.

Diverse classroom populations demand that we adopt teaching approaches that recognise that not all learners learn in the same manner and neither do they all need the same learning outcomes. Advances in our understanding of differentiated instruction have been significant in recent years with colleagues such as Ann Lewis and Brahm Norwich (2007) presenting evidence of how teachers, through careful consideration of the needs of individuals and the aims established for each lesson can ensure that all learners participate



in class. Unfortunately in many classes approaches to differentiation have been limited to simply presenting students with different, generally simpler work, whereas research has shown that differentiation by student interest, by sequence or by structure can ensure that students who were previously denied access to lessons engage fully and learn successfully. Indeed I would point anyone who believes that differentiated instruction is a limited concept to the earlier work of Lewis (1991) who identifies eleven forms of differentiation which have had an impact in inclusive classrooms.

### **Inclusive Teaching**

Teaching to Encourage Inclusion	Research in Support of Efficacy
Differentiated Instruction	Lewis & Norwich (2007); O'Brien & Guiney (2001)
Peer Support	Carter & Kennedy (2006)
Personal Support	Rutter (2001); Todd (2007)
Self Advocacy	Astramovich & Harris (2007); Rose & Shevlin (2015)
Universal Design for Learning	Loreman, Deppeler & Harvey (2001); Rose, Gravel and Gordon (2014)

The nature of the support we provide in classrooms is of course critical. Whilst in many parts of the world the provision of additional adult support has been used specifically to assist those students who have difficulties with learning (Giangreco and Doyle 2007) the economic circumstances in many countries make such initiatives impossible. However, the use of peer support has been shown to be effective both for the most able and least able students involved (Carter and Kennedy 2006). Students who are struggling with learning or who are working in a second language often respond better to their peers than they do to teachers, feeling less pressure to succeed and finding it easier to maintain a relationship. There is also evidence that the supporting peer in such activities benefits by having to explain concepts, thereby reinforcing their own understanding of learning. However, research into peer group

learning in India is currently limited and I would certainly recommend this as an area in need of further attention.

Similarly in need of greater consideration is the promotion of self-advocacy which has been seen to produce good results in encouraging the development of self-esteem and enabling learners with difficulties to maintain a focus upon their own learning in the few studies conducted (Astramovich and Harris 2007; Rose and Shevlin 2015). Students who present with challenging behaviours often express the view that their opinions and needs are ignored by teachers and in such situations the establishment of approaches that demonstrate a willingness to enable them to identify and plan for their own learning needs has proven beneficial.

If we shift our attention from the teacher to the environment we can again find evidence from research that indicates how relatively simple changes can enable learners to be better included in mainstream classrooms. The work of colleagues such as Howley and Arnold (2005) exploring the use of visual structure, much of it relatively simple such as the use of visual timetables, or of visual cue cards, or the development of comic strips or social stories indicates that many students who struggle with aspects of communication can be assisted by these strategies. Similarly, by giving some attention to the ways in which we organise group activity in classrooms and the roles which we expect students to play in these groups, it is possible to enable students of diverse needs to collaborate in learning, each bringing a unique contribution to the activities involved (Aronson 2002; Gillies, Ashman and Terwel 2008).

## Inclusive Learning Environments

Visual Structure	Howley & Arnold (2005)
Variation on Classroom Groupings	Aronson (2002) Gillies, Ashman & Terwel (2008)
Organisation of classroom spaces	Smith (2007) Hume & Odom (2007) McAllister & Maguire (2012)

If little consideration has been given by researchers to the aforementioned areas, then the ergonomics of classrooms and the influence of the environment upon learning have received even less. There is certainly evidence to suggest that classroom arrangements can have a dramatic impact upon learning (Smith 2007), but the time devoted to understanding this has been at best limited. Whilst some attention has been given to specific classroom organisation interventions such as the use of individual workspaces (Hume and Odom 2007; McAllister and Maguire 2012) these have often been focused upon specific populations such as students diagnosed on the autism spectrum with little efforts to generalise to a broader population.

### **Outcomes**

If asked to prioritise an issue in urgent need of research in relation to inclusion, I would suggest that we require a far stronger evidence base in respect of the outcomes of promoting inclusive schools. We cannot hope to challenge exclusion simply by stating that it is wrong and that every child has a right to education. It is evident that even some of our colleagues who support the principles of equity and social justice continue to be challenged by the idea that all students should be educated together. Unlike some of my contemporaries I do not condemn these colleagues but believe that their apprehensions need to be fully and transparently addressed. As a final focal point for this presentation I will

present some of the existing evidence that suggests that when well managed, and this is an important caveat, inclusive education has major benefits for all learners and for teachers.

Very few detailed studies of the impact of inclusive education have been conducted to date, but those that have indicate that the two major concerns about classroom disruption and negative effects upon academic standards do not materialise in well managed situations. In their study conducted in UK schools Black-Hawkins, Florian and Rouse (2007) found that an increasing diverse population in schools had no detrimental effect upon academic standards. However, they do acknowledge that teacher attitudes and expectations and confidence which increased with appropriate training were all essential elements of ensuring that academic outcomes were maintained. The findings from this study confirm those of Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson and Kaplan, (2007) who found no adverse effects on pupils without SEN of including pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools.

Findings from Project IRIS (Rose, Shevlin, Winter, and O’Raw 2015), the largest longitudinal study of provision for students with special educational needs conducted in Europe, similarly found that inclusive schools in Ireland had maintained academic standards and had witnessed no decline in discipline or behaviour over the four year period of the research. Once again this research indicated the importance of high teacher expectations, effective training and well organised classroom management as elements of ensuring this success.

In addition to those studies focused upon disability and special educational needs, there are others which indicate equally positive outcomes for students from refugee families (Hooper, Zong, Capps and Fix (2016) and those from tribal first generation learner groups (Malkani 2017).

Much of what I have presented in the latter part of this presentation has drawn upon research from western educational contexts. I know that the conditions that have been created in schools here in India and elsewhere in Asia differ significantly from those in my own region. However, I believe that a sharing of information and continued dialogue across nations can contribute much to enable the conditions for inclusive education to be created here and elsewhere.

I hope that what I have presented in this paper might have gone some way to enabling us to identify what I see as being a critical challenge for the immediate future. That is, that we should redouble our efforts to ensure that every child has his or her right to a quality education addressed, we should speak out against actions that lead to the oppression and marginalisation of individuals and whole communities of children and that every opportunity should be taken to investigate those conditions which will enable us to truly challenge exclusion. If we can do this together I feel sure we will all feel more comfortable with whatever image we may see when we stand before a mirror.

## धन्यवाद

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\*In 1835 *The Cruelty to Animals Act* prohibited bear-baiting and cockfighting. It was amended in 1849 to enable to imposition of a prison sentence for the unlawful killing of any animals covered within the law.

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