

Infrastructural Accessibility To The CWSNS in Govt. Elementary Schools

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Abstract

Inclusive education is a human right and a key to getting quality education that is equitable to everyone. Within the framework of the Right to Education Act (2009) in India, it is now a national agenda to see to it that Children With Special Needs (CWSNs) are completely included in the mainstream education system. Nonetheless, progressive policies notwithstanding, infrastructural accessibility are one of the greatest impediments to the effective integration of CWSNs in government elementary educational institutions. This quantitative study assesses the infrastructural accessibility available to Children With Special Needs (CWSNs) in government elementary schools under the Juria Elementary Educational Block of Nagaon District, Assam. The total population comprised 346 CWSNs belonging to four disability categories—Low Vision, Hearing Impairment, Locomotor Impairment, and Speech-Language Impairment. Using a stratified random sampling technique, a final sample of 192 students was selected. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics, Chi-square tests, and One-way ANOVA to examine differences in accessibility and inclusiveness across disability types.

Findings reveal critical infrastructural shortcomings: while 65.6% found ramps and railings useful, 34.4% reported that the available facilities were not accessible in their functional design; 100% schools lacked special educators and resource centres; 72.4% of students did not receive any aids and appliances under Inclusive Education; and none of the students had awareness of the RPWD Act (2016). Significant differences ($p < .001$) were detected across disability groups in teacher support, inclusive practices, and infrastructural accessibility, indicating that children with locomotor and speech-language impairments faced greater barriers than those with low vision. The results highlight persistent gaps between inclusive education policy provisions and actual infrastructural implementation at the school level. Strengthening audits, ensuring disability-responsive infrastructure, and improving support services emerge as essential steps toward achieving meaningful inclusion.

Keywords: *Infrastructural, CWSNS, Government, Elementary Schools, Schools, India*

Introduction

In India, elementary education has a central role in the development history of the nation in general and following the passing of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (colloquially, the Right to Education or RTE Act) (Lafleur, 2024). The Act has become a historical turnaround in the education world as education will be a fundamental right between the age of 6 and 14 years. The act focused on access to education and also emphasized on equity, inclusion and quality (Sharma, 2018). Focus on inclusive education was one of the most prominent features of the Act; children with special needs (CWSNs) should no longer be marginalized and offered unequal opportunities to learn in the mainstream educational system (Dash, 2018). Though policy and legislative framework has been doing a lot in ensuring inclusivity, there are numerous challenges when considering the ground implementation especially in regard to the infrastructural accessibility (Charate, 2020). In India, elementary government schools are the first point of access to formal education by most children particularly those of lesser means and rural origin. In case of CWSNs, the availability and flexibility of infrastructure have direct effects on their opportunity to engage in the process of learning (Kharlukhi, 2016). Many schools do not have ramps, handrails, barrier toilets, tactile paths, wide doors or classroom layouts that would facilitate the movement of wheelchair users. However, the provision of inclusive infrastructure through guidelines launched under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan is not being followed in the field significantly.

The primary objective of the present research is to examine the facilities and infrastructure available to children with special needs (CWSN) at the elementary school level.

- To examine the Inclusiveness of schools at the elementary level.
- To explore various infrastructural problems faced to the CWSN in elementary school.
- To examine the role of government in order to provide facilities & infrastructural accessible to the CWSN in elementary school.

Literature Review/Background analysis

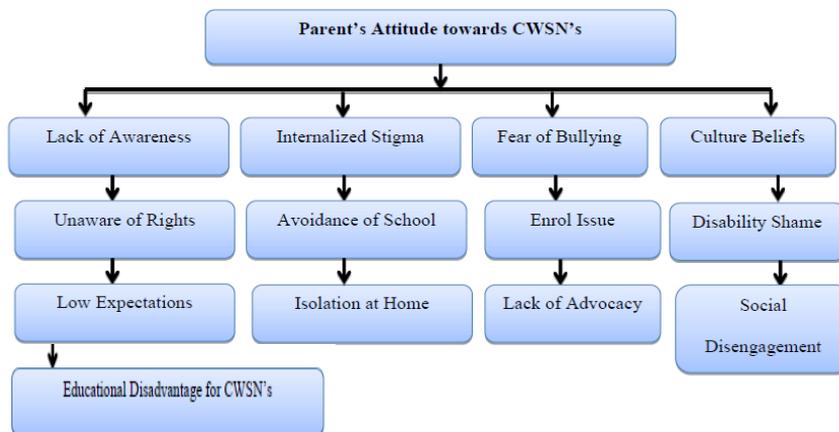
2.1 Parents attitude towards Inclusive Education for CWSN in Assam

Charate, (2020) examined that parents attitude towards Children with Special Needs (CWSNs) is important when influencing educational outcomes and also their social development. Parental views affect the amount of support that a child gets at home as well as his/her enrollment, attendance, and placement in formal school. Singha, et al., (2018) pointed out that regarding government elementary schools, particularly those in the rural or economically deprived regions, the attitudes of parents to disability

have a great influence on inclusion and empowerment of CWSNs. Kharlukhi, (2017) stated that the results of the present research expose a rather complicated combination of awareness, concern, stigma, and helplessness that defines the attitude of a great number of parents with CWSNs. Duarah, (2024) stated that a major percentage of the parents interviewed in the fieldwork showed an interest and an anxiousness in the well-being of their children, however also showed that they were not aware of their rights, and entitlements to education and the potential of inclusive education. Parents, especially those with low socio-economic status, viewed the disabilities of their children as a lasting impairment and that is why they had low expectations concerning their academic and social progress. There were parents who were afraid to send their children to normal schools in case they would be mocked at, or ignored, or the school system cannot address the specific needs of a particular child. The other common theme was an internalised stigma and a social pressure experienced by CWSNs families in their communities (Ahmed, 2024).

Figure-1

Concept Map: Barriers to Inclusive Education Arising from Parental Attitudes



The above Figure 1 conceptual map showing barrier to inclusive education that are caused by parental attitude. These include lack of awareness, stigma and social cultural misconception which contribute to educational exclusion of CWSNs. Disability is even still in some instances regarded as a view of shame, unfortunate accident or even supernatural belief. Naskar, (2019) analyzed that as a consequence of this stigma children with disabilities are frequently hidden away and kept out of the life of the community further alienating them in terms of education and interaction. Internalizing of this stigma by parents can deny their children an opportunity to live inclusive and fulfilling lives obviously. Bardhan, (2024) examined that moreover, mothers of CWSNs tend to carry an excessive burden where they are either accused or blamed about the child condition and this emotional strain further reduces their ability to speak up on behalf of the child regarding his/her educational rights. Borah, (2021) pointed out that parental disengagement is also caused by lack of adequate guidance and support systems. Majority of parents complained that they were not well informed about the availability of special educators and other

inclusive teaching resources and government programs meant to benefit CWSNs. Saikia, (2022) stated that such communication failure builds a vacuum between the schools and the families and parents feel deserted or alienated in the learning process. Sharma, (2018) pointed out that where it is implemented in schools; however, there is low use of these support structures brought about by ineffective outreach and follow-up. Lack of transport, financial inability, and unavailability of nearby inclusive schools are other factors which discourage parents to take their CWSNs to school. Parents were afraid that even after sending their children to school, their needs would not be met due to lack of available infrastructure and trained personnel.

Infrastructural development in Elementary schools

Majhi, (2019) examined that the important element in providing equitable, inclusive, and quality education to all children including Children with Special Needs (CWSNs) is the infrastructural development within the elementary schools. In the Indian situation, elementary schools, especially government schools, cater to a large and diverse community, usually in low resource settings. The creation of physical infrastructure does not only define how functional and safe a school will be but also demonstrates its willingness to host all learners regardless of their socio-economic background or physical ability. Kapur, (2019) analyzed that several national schemes like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan have laid stress on school infrastructure development, but on-ground implementation still remains a challenge in several ways. The physical condition of school building has been recognized as one of the most fundamental but little looked at attributes of school infrastructure. Barrett, et al., (2019) pointed out that some of the building structures are semi-permanent or need repairs in some government elementary schools.

Table-1

Key Infrastructural Challenges in Government Elementary Schools

Infrastructural Element	Identified Issues
School Buildings	Broken walls, leaking roofs, poor maintenance
Classroom Environment	Poor lighting, inadequate ventilation
Boundary Walls	Insecure campuses, open to trespassers and stray animals
Water & Sanitation Facilities	Limited access to clean drinking water; unsafe or shared sources
Inclusive Physical Access	Absence of ramps, wide doorways, and handrails
Classroom Design	Overcrowding, lack of flexible furniture and sensory materials
Safety & Security	Unsafe environments, especially for girls and children with disabilities
Policy Implementation	Gaps between government schemes and actual field-level compliance

Broken walls, leaking roofs, broken windows, and battered floors not only make learning undesirable but also cause safety risks, particularly to younger children and physically challenged children. Jannah, et al., (2020) stated that lack of proper ventilation and lighting also decreases functionality of the classrooms making learning hard. Another issue of concern is the lack or bad state of the boundary walls. Shirrell, (2019) stated that boundary walls are critical in the safety and security of students especially the girls and young children. The lack of adequate enclosures makes schools open to trespassers, stray animals, and external interference. Cuesta, (2016) examined that an open or insecure campus is even more dangerous to CWSNs, particularly with cognitive or behavioral issues. Siswanto, (2020) examined that safe physical space is therefore essential towards facilitating frequent attendance and parental confidence in the system of schooling.

Peurach, (2015) stated that the provision of clean and safe drinking water is also a long-standing problem in most government schools, more so in those located in the rural areas or drought prone regions. The water sources that should be available and serve as functional water sources have been found to be non-existent or shared by the adjacent households in various schools that have been visited in the course of the field study and are therefore unreliable. Mokaya, (2013) examined that this issue impacts disproportionately girl students and CWSNs that can need access to water more often. Poor or inadequate drinking water provisions and facilities do not only affect health, but also lead to absenteeism and lack of participation in classroom activities. Hopkins, (2013) stated that the other source of extreme urgency is the classroom infrastructure. Schools have overcrowded and inadequately equipped classrooms that lack inclusive learning designs. There are no ramps, spacious doorframes, moveable furniture, or sensory-based materials that can enable the CWSNs to actively engage in classroom lessons.

2.3 Government role to provide facilities and infrastructural accessible to the CWSN in elementary school

Sharma, (2018) pointed out that one of the most ambitious and wide-reaching educational program initiated in India, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was introduced in 2001 with a goal to expand elementary education to all children. Priyanka, (2018) stated that this term Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is an Indian term which simply means Education for All Movement, and it was a pure reaction against the constitutional call up given in the 86 th Amendment issuing free education compulsory to all children between age 6 and 14 years. Charate, (2020) examined that SSA is the effort of the Government of India to ensure that it can realize universal elementary education (UEE) in time bound manner that is in line with the global goals like the Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Bansal, (2016) stated that the most important working agenda of SSA is under the concept of quality elementary education to all children

irrespective of their socio-economic background, gender, and physical and mental ability. Sharma, (2018) examined that the program does not only attempt to expand the number of children enrolled in schools and retained in schools, but also to improve the quality of education and reduce gender and social category gaps. Nahdiyah, (2022) examined that among the most fundamental characteristics of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, some take center stage in its design and delivery system. Singh, (2019) pointed out that it is a centrally sponsored scheme, which implies that it is funded by both the central and the state governments. Kumar, (2024) examined that SSA is planned and implemented in a decentralized way and gives local authorities like Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), School Management Committees (SMCs), and Village Education Committees (VECs) a chance to participate actively. Such local participation aids in customizing educational programs to suit the local needs and also leads to more accountability and monitoring.

Table-2**Government Initiatives for Inclusive Infrastructure under SSA**

Focus Area	Key Highlights
Legislative Foundation	SSA launched in response to 86th Amendment mandating free education for ages 6–14
Universal Access Goals	Aims to achieve Universal Elementary Education (UEE) for all children, including CWSNs
Infrastructure Development	Emphasis on building classrooms, ramps, boundary walls, accessible toilets, drinking water
Decentralized Implementation	Local bodies like PRIs, SMCs, VECs involved in customizing and monitoring delivery
Inclusion-Focused Support	Ramps, resource rooms, and aids for CWSNs included in infrastructure norms
Mid-Day Meal Scheme	Supplements access and attendance by providing meals, uniforms, textbooks
Teacher Recruitment & Training	Focus on appointing teachers and providing TLMs and inclusive education training
Support Systems	Academic support through Block & Cluster Resource Centres (BRCs & CRCs)

Isnawati, (2025) stated that under Mid-Day Meal Scheme the free supply of textbooks, uniforms and midday meals supplements the SSA agenda to minimize the dropouts and also motivates students to attend school. Dash, (2018) pointed out that another important part is teacher recruitment and training. SSA has enabled massive appointments of teachers to support the concerns of pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) in the government schools. It focuses on continuous professional development of teachers by providing teacher training, development of Teaching Learning Materials (TLM)

and provides academic support through Block and Cluster Resource Centers. The first strategic pillar is access that entails the opening up of new schools in unfilled habitations and enhancement of infrastructure in existing schools.

Research Methodology

The proposed study uses a quantitative research design by focusing on the availability of infrastructural facilities in government primary schools, to Children with Special Needs (CWSNs). The quantitative method was selected to enable the implementation of systematic measurement, statistical analysis, and objective evaluation of the connection between infrastructural provisions and the experiences of CWSNs in the school setting. The central idea of the research is to accumulate empirical data about the role of infrastructural components that support or obstruct students with disabilities access to and engagement in education. A stratified random sampling technique was used. The total population of 346 CWSNs was divided into four strata (Low Vision, Hearing Impairment, Locomotor Impairment, Speech Impairment). From each stratum, 192 participants were randomly selected as the sample. This study sample has 192 students with various kinds of disabilities physical, visual, hearing, intellectual, multiple disabilities, etc. These students were selected among the different government elementary schools so as to have diversity and representativeness. The data collection procedure entailed the use of structured questionnaires which were used to collect data on perceptions and experience of students regarding school infrastructure. The questionnaire covered accessibility of school buildings, classrooms, toilets, playgrounds and transport facility, access to assistive devices and support services. The teachers and parents were also brought in, to give a background to the views of the students, more so where there was a communication gap. The reliability of the questionnaire was established using Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha = 0.820$), indicating strong internal consistency. Face and content validity were ensured through expert review by three inclusive education specialists.

Results and Findings

The internal consistency of the scale was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The results indicated good reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of .820 across the 50 items, suggesting that the items consistently measure the same underlying construct.

1. Objective: To Examine the Inclusiveness of Schools at the Elementary Level Data Collection Approach:

Utilize questions related to teacher support, peer interaction, classroom engagement, and participation in co-curricular activities (e.g., Q3, Q7, Q9, Q29, Q35, Q37, Q38).

Table-3
Teacher support (Q3, Q4, Q9)

Questions	Response	n	%
Does your teacher help you to attend morning assembly?	YES	192	100.0%
Does your teacher help you in seating arrangement in the class?	YES	192	100.0%
Is Teacher use sign language, gesture along with verbal command during classroom transaction?	NO	90	46.9%
	YES	102	53.1%

The support of teachers is an important factor in establishing inclusiveness. One hundred percent (100%) of all the 192 students claimed to have been helped by their teachers to go to the morning assembly and their sitting arrangement in classroom. Moreover, 53.1% (n=102) of students indicated that their instructors do communicate through the use of sign language, gestures, and verbal commands, whereas 46.9% (n=90) of students replied that these inclusive communication methods were not applied regularly. Interaction with other children in group tasks is one of the factors that will encourage a welcoming environment in school.

Table-4
Peer interaction in group activities (Q7).

Questions	Response	n	%
Are you engaged with your friends in group activities?	YES	192	100.0%

The survey revealed that 100 percent (n=192) of students are active in group activities with their friends and this shows high level of socialization and inclusivity of students in the group activities with their friends. Inclusion is also a vital indicator of participation in school events. The findings show that the 100% (192) of school students participate in Annual School Week and World Braille Day (January 4th).

Table-5
Participation in school events (Q35, Q37, Q38).

Questions	Response	n	%
Do you participate in Annual school week?	YES	192	100.0%
Did you attend last Gunatsav ?	YES	192	100.0%
Do you participate in World Braille Day on 4th January?	YES	192	100.0%

The participation in the final Gunotsav was 100% (n=192) stressing the good involvement in institution-level initiatives. Inclusive teaching programmes improve the experience of learning every student. The result of the survey indicates that 100% (n=192) of the students will benefit when teachers use short sentences to enhance understanding. In addition, all of the students stated that they had been receiving certain educational services that were aimed at attributing to taking part in usual education programs. Nevertheless, 53.1 percent (n=102) of students found that their instructors use sign language, gestures, and verbal orders during classroom attention, but 46.9 percent (n=90) of them did not get any such assistance. These results demonstrate positive teacher support, interpersonal connection and engagement in school activities.

Table-6
Use of inclusive teaching methods (Q9, Q19, Q29).

Questions	Response	n	%
Do the teachers use short sentences in the classroom?	YES	192	100.0%
Do you engage in any specific educational services in order to make you participate in regular education programme?	YES	192	100.0%
Is Teacher use sign language, gesture along with verbal command during classroom transaction?	NO	90	46.90%
	YES	102	53.10%

The potential exists to further enhance inclusion in teaching practices, specifically by ensuring the regularity in the instruction format, sign language and multimodal approaches to learners. The Pearson correlation between the type of disability and main inclusive indicators demonstrates significant tendencies.

Table-7
Correlations between Disability Type and Various Inclusiveness Indicators

Dependent Variable	df	F	p	η^2	95% CI η^2	ϵ^2
Teachers Support	3	22.158	<.001	.261	[.152, .350]	.249
Participation	3	1.059	.368	.017	[.000, .055]	.001
Inclusive	3	22.158	<.001	.261	[.152, .350]	.249
Infrastructure	3	60.901	<.001	.493	[.388, .566]	.485
Tools	3	1.059	.368	.017	[.000, .055]	.001
Special	3	.828	.480	.013	[.000, .047]	-.003

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine differences across four categories of children with special needs (CWSN)—Low Vision, Hearing Impairment, Locomotor Impairment, and Speech-Language Impairment—on six dependent variables: Teachers’ Support, Participation, Inclusive Practices, Infrastructure, Tools, and Special Provisions. The analysis revealed significant group differences for Teachers’ Support ($F(3,188) = 22.16, p < .001, \eta^2 = .261$), Inclusive Practices ($F(3,188) = 22.16, p < .001, \eta^2 = .261$), and Infrastructure ($F(3,188) = 60.90, p < .001, \eta^2 = .493$), indicating medium to large effect sizes. No significant differences were observed for Participation ($F(3,188) = 1.06, p = .368, \eta^2 = .017$), Tools ($F(3,188) = 1.06, p = .368, \eta^2 = .017$), or Special Provisions ($F(3,188) = .83, p = .480, \eta^2 = .013$), suggesting negligible differences among groups for these variables. Post-hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni method showed that for Teachers’ Support and Inclusive Practices, children with Locomotor Impairment scored significantly higher than those with Low Vision and Hearing Impairment, while children with Speech-Language Impairment scored significantly lower than all other groups. For Infrastructure, Low Vision scored lower than Locomotor Impairment but higher than Hearing Impairment and Speech-Language Impairment in certain pairwise comparisons; Locomotor Impairment scored significantly higher than Hearing Impairment and Speech-Language Impairment, whereas Speech-Language Impairment scored significantly lower than both Low Vision and Locomotor Impairment. No significant post-hoc differences were found for Participation, Tools, or Special Provisions. Overall, these findings suggest that differences in Teachers’ Support, Inclusive Practices, and Infrastructure are most pronounced among children with Locomotor and Speech-Language Impairments, while Participation, access to tools, and special provisions were relatively uniform across CWSN categories.

2. Objective: To Explore Various Infrastructural Problems Faced by CWSN in Elementary Schools

Data Collection Approach:

Focus on questions about physical accessibility and infrastructure (e.g., Q5, Q6, Q13, Q15, Q20, Q22)

Table-8
Physical infrastructure (ramps, railings, steps—Q5, Q13)

Questions	Response	n	%
Ramp & Railing is useful for you or not?	Yes	126	65.6%
	No	66	34.4%
Are the steps equal, even height and non slippery?	YES	192	100.0%

Physical infrastructure availability and accessibility is very crucial when it comes to the creation of an inclusive learning environment. 65.6% students (n=126) consider ramps and railings helpful, whereas 34.4% (n=66) found them not helpful, which indicates that their design or installation could be improved to make them more accessible. Positively, 100% (n=192) of students indicated that the peddles in their school are of equal height, flat, and slip-free thus, portraying a good walking environment with no slip- hazards to the students. Although basic infrastructure seems to be established, the efficiency and the accessibility of ramps and railings may still be enhanced to better serve students who use it to move. The absolute majority of 192 (100 percent) students answered that yes, tactile Teaching-Learning Materials (TLMs) have been used in their classrooms, which demonstrated a high attempt of implementing sensory-based learning strategies. Equally, 100% (n=192) indicated that the blackboard is spotted and visible when seated hence good participation in the classroom. Nevertheless, 100% (n=192) of students reported that no different signage is used within the school, which may deteriorate the accessibility, especially of students with visual shortcomings or who have to use the visual information to navigate.

Table-9

Educational tools (blackboard visibility, tactile materials, signage—Q6, Q18, Q12).

Questions	Response	N	%
Do you know Indian Sign Language?	NO	192	100.0%
Is there use of tactile TLMs in the Class?	YES	192	100.0%
Is there use of different signage in the school?	NO	192	100.0%

The students do not all know Indian Sign Language (ISL), another aspect of exclusion in communication practices. Special educators and resource centers are also needed in order to offer special care to students with varying learning needs. The survey shows that not one of the students (100%, n=192) can have a resource center or a special educator on the territory of their school. The lack of a separate model of support services shows that there is a major deficit in delivering inclusive education, which can potentially restrict the individual support that specific students might need in their academic and personal growth. In order to create an environment that is really inclusive, it is of essence that resource centers are introduced and special educators, capable of giving special instruction and support to students of varying abilities are employed.

Table -10.

Availability of special educators and resource centers (Q22, Q23).

Questions	Response	n	%
Is there any resource centre in your school?	NO	192	100.0%
Is there any Special Educator in your School?	NO	192	100.0%

The presence of special educators and resource centers is essential for providing tailored support to students with diverse learning needs.

3. Objective: To Examine the Role of Government in Providing Facilities and Infrastructure.

Data Collection Approach:

Include questions about government-provided facilities and support services (e.g., Q25, Q39, Q41, Q46).

Variables:

Table-11
Government interventions (e.g., stipends, aids, and appliances—Q39, Q41).

Questions	Response	n	%
Did you get any Aids and Appliances under Inclusive Education?	NO	139	72.4%
	YES	53	27.6%
Did you get Transport/Escort/Girls Stipend under Inclusive Education?	NO	90	46.9%
	YES	102	53.1%

Stipends, aids, and appliances provided by the government are important in ensuring inclusive education occurs because a student with disabilities is provided with adequate resources to help him or her excel in academic work. The survey shows that not all students have access to the necessary assistive measures with only 27.6 percent (n=53) receiving aids and appliances as part of Inclusive Education, with the rest, 72.4% (n=139) receiving none. Regarding financial and transport support, a greater part of students 53.1% (n=102) received transport, escort, or girls stipends as part of Inclusive Education programs, and 46.9% (n=90) of them did not. It indicates that, although more than half of the students are covered through such interventions, a significant segment of the population is outside the coverage area. The findings reveal that even though there are government interventions, there is no equity in getting the aids, appliances, and financial aid. To increase the effectiveness of such initiatives, it is necessary to strengthen the distribution channels and outreach services to guarantee that every deserving student would have the required assistance.

Table-12
Visits by resource persons (Q25, Q31)

Questions	Response	n	%
Does Resource Person Regularly visit your School?	NO	192	100.0%
Does your resource Person discuss about your academic progress with school teachers?	YES	192	100.0%

The role of resource persons is crucial in facilitating inclusive education where they offer specialized guidance and help to both students and teachers. A resource person is not visiting the school on a regular basis (n=0, 100%), according to the students. This is a missing indication of direct sustained intervention by professionals that would provide specific interventions to students with special educational needs. All students, 100% (n=192) said that they have resource person who discusses his/her academic progress with teachers in the school. This means that resource persons are not necessarily in the schools, but to some extent, academic monitoring and communication is being implemented.

Table -13
Awareness of policies like RPWD Act 2016 (Q45).

Questions		n	%
Do you know about RPWD act 2016 and scope of it?	NO	192	100.0%

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016, is an important policy that is instrumental in fostering inclusivity and guaranteeing the provision of equal opportunities to the people with disabilities. But the current survey results indicate that all the students (100%, n=192) are not conscious of the RPWD Act 2016 or the scope. This ignorance implies that there is a major disparity in the knowledge of the rights of the students, how to seek support systems, and what kind of legal defense they have under the Act.

Table-14
Summary of all questions

SI No	Questions		n	%
1	Do you come to school regularly?	YES	192	100.0%
2	Do you feel any difficulty in coming to school?	NO	192	100.0%
3	Does your teacher help you to attend morning assembly?	YES	192	100.0%
4	Does your teacher help you in seating arrangement in the class?	YES	192	100.0%
5	Ramp & Railing is useful for you or not?	NO	66	34.4%
		YES	126	65.6%
6	Is blackboard reachable to you in the class?	YES	192	100.0%
7	Are you engaged with your friends in group activities?	YES	192	100.0%
8	Is the Blackboard well visible or enough lighted to you from your seating position?	YES	192	100.0%

9	Is Teacher use sign language, gesture along with verbal command during classroom transaction?	NO	90	46.9%
		YES	102	53.1%
10	Is there use of large print book in the classroom?	NO	192	100.0%
11	Do you provide training for reading & writing on Braille?	NO	192	100.0%
12	Is there use of different signage in the school?	NO	192	100.0%
13	Are the steps equal, even height and non slippery?	YES	192	100.0%
14	Do you get any difficulty in taking PM-Poshan meal in the school?	NO	192	100.0%
15	Is the hand washing tape is reachable to your height?	YES	192	100.0%
16	Do you know Indian Sign Language?	NO	192	100.0%
17	Are the class teachers using Indian Sign Language?	NO	192	100.0%
18	Is there use of tactile TLMs in the Class?	YES	192	100.0%
19	Do the teachers use short sentences in the classroom?	YES	192	100.0%
20	Are there low vision kits, magnifying glass available in the school?	NO	192	100.0%
21	Do you require assistance during toileting?	NO	192	100.0%
22	Is there any resource centre in your school?	NO	192	100.0%
23	Is there any Special Educator in your School?	NO	192	100.0%
24	Do you know about Resource Person under Inclusive Education?	YES	192	100.0%
25	Does Resource Person Regularly visit your School?	NO	192	100.0%
26	Do you ever test your current academic level?	YES	192	100.0%
27	Does Resource Person teach you in school?	YES	192	100.0%
28	Is there any annual goal set including any short term objective for your academics?	NO	192	100.0%
29	Do you engage in any specific educational services in order to make you participate in regular education programme?	YES	192	100.0%
30	Do you determine whether instructional objectives are being achieved or not?	NO	90	46.9%
		YES	102	53.1%
31	Does your resource Person discuss about your academic progress with school teachers?	YES	192	100.0%

32	Does your Resource Person/ Teacher discuss with your parents about your academic progress?	YES	192	100.0%
33	Do your Parents attend monthly Parents Teacher Meet?	YES	192	100.0%
34	Is your parent included in School Management Committee?	NO	153	79.7%
		YES	39	20.3%
35	Do you participate in Annual school week?	YES	192	100.0%
36	Did you attend last Gunatsav ?	NO	80	41.7%
		YES	112	58.3%
37	Do you participate in International Day for Person with Disabilities on 3rd December?	YES	192	100.0%
38	Do you participate in World Braille Day on 4th January?	YES	192	100.0%
39	Did you get any Aids and Appliances under Inclusive Education?	NO	139	72.4%
		YES	53	27.6%
40	Does your teacher know about use of Aids and Appliances?	NO	95	49.5%
		YES	97	50.5%
41	Did you get Transport/Escort/Girls Stipend under Inclusive Education?	NO	90	46.9%
		YES	102	53.1%
42	Have you ever bullied by any other children in school?	NO	192	100.0%
43	If bullied, did teacher punish him/her?	NO	192	100.0%
44	Did you ever go for field trip with your class friend?	YES	192	100.0%
45	Do you know about RPWD act 2016 and scope of it?	NO	192	100.0%
46	Do you provide extra time during evaluation?	NO	108	56.3%
		YES	84	43.8%
47	Do you provide large print question papers in the evaluation?	NO	192	100.0%
48	Do you provide objective type questions rather than essay type questions in the evaluation?	NO	108	56.3%
		YES	84	43.8%
49	Do you use Braille during evaluation?	NO	192	100.0%
50	Have you got UDID card?	NO	84	43.8%
		YES	108	56.3%

Discussion

Inclusiveness of Elementary Schools

Additional subgroup analysis (according to the type of disability) was performed through Pearson correlation, as well as it showed that teacher support and inclusive teaching methods had moderate positive correlations with some types of disability. The split-analysis by age and PTR was not provided, however, because at this level it is impossible to get the information about the PTR of the individual schools. Such omissions restrict a more detailed perception of the patterns of inclusiveness. The recommended practice in order to make the classroom inclusive is adapting the regular application of Indian Sign Language (ISL) in the classroom to students with hearing impairment. The inclusion of disability-related training plans to teachers can significantly enhance the level of pedagogical responsiveness.

Infrastructural Problems Faced by CWSNs

The responses collected during the survey indicate that visits by the Resource Person are irregular, and students reported no regular contact. However, field observations and anecdotal evidence suggest that visits may occur once or twice a week. This inconsistency highlights the need for improved communication and systematic record-keeping regarding the frequency and impact of such visits, and has been considered in the analysis of the findings.

To enhance inclusiveness, schools should improve the visibility and accessibility of signage, particularly for students with visual impairments (VI). In addition, design audits of ramps and railings are recommended to address usability issues reported by students with locomotor impairments (LI).

Role of Government in Providing Facilities and Infrastructure

The survey ascertained that none of the respondents had heard of the existence of the RPWD Act, 2016 or provisions of the same even though this is a cornerstone policy in the inclusive education. This total ignorance shows a huge gap in implementation and also indicates the gap between policy frameworks and on-ground performance. Disability rights should be given a compulsory orientation (i.e. RPWD Act, 2016) to the students, teachers, and the parents at the school level. Moreover, government programs, i.e. provision of aids and appliances, should have more robust outreach mechanisms so that there is equitable access and higher awareness amongst those who can avail them.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Findings of this research give a complete understanding of the existing situation to the accessibility of infrastructures to Children with Special Needs (CWSNs) in government elementary schools. The evidence shows that although the Right to Education Act and inclusion education policy have enabled equal learning, infrastructural inadequacy has been a key impediment to most students with disabilities (Bikram, 2022). With the sample size of 192 CWSNs, a significant number of them indicated that they encountered challenges accessing the required facilities, including playgrounds, toilets, and classrooms. The analysis of data with the help of Pearson correlation method revealed significant correlations between the kind of disability and the kind of accessibility issues (Ringu, 2024). Students that have physical impairment were always more affected in

their difficulty to navigate around school premises in areas where there were no ramps, handrails, or wheelchair-friendly toilets or in areas where these facilities were poorly designed (Kharlukhi, 2016). A critical look at the findings indicates that lack of a problem is not only a matter of lack of a policy, but rather a matter of implementation and monitoring of the same. Although infrastructural guidelines can be found in the programs of inclusive education, such as the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, compliance with these guidelines is not always followed (Singh, 2021). The field data also emphasized differences among schools, some being partially compliant with provisions, but some not even having basic facilities to support CWSNs. This gap indicates systemic problems like insufficient funds, less sensitization of the school personnel, and non-involvement of stakeholders in the planning of inclusive infrastructures.

Additionally, the results indicate that infrastructural inadequacies are usually aggravated by the lack of assistive learning tools and support systems (Kumar, 2024). Some students who are both visually and hearing impaired indicated that they lacked Braille books, audio devices, or sign language assistance. Their absence in these facilities does not only influence the physical access but also academic involvement and psychosocial inclusion (Kumar, 2024). One area that the study found conspicuous was the lack of inclusive design thinking in infrastructure planning and design facilities erected in most cases did not fit the broad range of disabilities that were found in the classroom. Based on these results, the research has a number of recommendations (Rajendran, 2018). To start with, an elaborate audit of the infrastructure of all government elementary schools must be compulsorily conducted with specific attention being paid to accessibility with different forms of disability (Mahapatra, 2016). Second, repeated training and sensitization sessions should be subjected to school administrators and staff in the move to embrace a practice of inclusion and what it takes to understand the diverse needs of CWSNs. Third, inclusive infrastructure should also be ring fenced in the school development budgets so that construction and maintenance of the facilities are prioritized. School structures can be more contextual and responsive when parents, special educators, and community members are more involved in school infrastructure planning.

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