

Review Article

Unlocking Potential: A Comprehensive Analysis of Inclusive Education Policies for Children with Disabilities in Nepal

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Abstract

Special Education Council was established in 1973 after the 1971 National Education System Plan transformed inclusive education in Nepal. Despite delays, 2015 constitutional mandates and 2019 National Education Policy support inclusive education. This review article examines Nepal's inclusive education policies from 1996 to 2017 focusing on changes and challenges. Recent successes include the 2010 ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2018 Compulsory and Free Education Act. The 2019 policy merger and 2076 Education Policy lack inclusive education implementation plans, indicating areas needing improvement. Utilizing Policy Implementation Theory alongside SWOT Analysis, this study endeavors to assess the efficacy of existing policies, evaluate historical adaptations, and scrutinize adherence to international commitments within the Nepalese context. As the International Institute for Educational Planning highlights, legislative frameworks play a pivotal role in fostering parity and inclusivity, underscoring the imperative for stakeholder consensus. Nepal's 2015 constitution meets international standards; however, physical accessibility is still a concern. The study focuses on accessibility, inclusive party laws, manifestos, and collaboration with OPDs, which are recommended for effective representation. Similarly, equal education and employment require inclusive curriculum design and barrier removal in inclusive education and vocational training. Nepal faces policy discrepancies, a lack of trained special educators, and insufficient resources. Implementing inclusive education policies in Nepal is challenging due to contextual, organizational, and policy barriers. It requires infrastructure investments, awareness campaigns, and targeted regulations. Infrastructure investments, awareness campaigns, and targeted regulations are needed implementing inclusive education policies in Nepal is complicated by contextual, organizational, and policy barriers. The study recommends a comprehensive, situation-specific strategy using school psychologists to promote inclusive mindsets in technical and vocational education with invest in infrastructure development to ensure physical accessibility for individuals with disabilities and enact policies that promote inclusive practices within educational and vocational training institutions.

Keywords

Inclusive Education, Disability Rights, Policy Review, Vocational Training, Barriers

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1. Introduction

The Consolidated Equity Strategy for the School Education Sector was implemented in Nepal in December 2014. Its principal objective is to rectify inequities that exist among children in basic and secondary public education with regard to access, participation, and academic achievements. The approach takes on a dual purpose by integrating the creation of an Equity in Education Index (Equity Index) at the district level and by the government and development partners consolidating pre-existing strategies. Utilizing the Equity Index as a crucial instrument for planning and monitoring, particular interventions are directed at the most disadvantaged districts. In addition, one of the stretch indicators for eligibility in the variable component of the Global Partnership for Education grant is designated for its development and utilization. The Education Management Information System (EMIS) / Flash System incorporates the Equity Index, which corresponds to the government's endeavors to distribute resources in accordance with equity as outlined in the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan/Annual Work Plan and Budget.

In addition, the World Conference on Special Needs Education in 1994 served as a significant catalyst for inclusive education. Convening in Salamanca, Spain, it brought together over 300 participants from 92 governments and 25 international organizations. The conference aimed to advance the goal of Education for All by deliberating on the essential policy changes needed to embrace inclusive education principles. This involved empowering schools to cater to the needs of all children, especially those identified as having special educational requirements [1]. For Ensuring Quality Education Goal 4 of SDG, individuals with disabilities may encounter obstacles when accessing education, hindering their opportunities, and reinforcing disparities. This objective strives to guarantee inclusive, fair, and high-quality education while fostering continuous learning opportunities for everyone [2].

The Consolidated Equity Strategy was introduced in 2014, indicating a deliberate effort to improve equity and inclusivity in numerous facets of society, including education. This technique aims to develop an inclusive educational environment by creating a fairer educational environment for all. In 2017, the country embraced the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) to protect and advance the rights of individuals with disabilities. The government has also implemented various policies and laws to support inclusive education, including the Inclusive Education Policy (2018) and the Disability Rights and Protection Act 2017 [2]. Building on these achievements, the Act Relating to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was enacted in 2017, along with the adoption of the Equity Index. These legislative initiatives aimed to provide a legal framework for protecting the rights of people with disabilities and ensuring their equal participation in all aspects of life. With the passage of the Act Relating to Compulsory and Free Education in 2018, the

educational landscape experienced substantial change. This act reaffirmed the government's commitment to making education available to all, in keeping with the values of inclusion. The year 2019 saw a watershed moment in education policy, with the National Education Policy superseding the Inclusive Education Policy of 2017. This policy move enforced the provision of inclusive education, demonstrating a holistic commitment to meeting all students' unique learning requirements.

In 2020, the Inclusive Education Policy of 2019 was incorporated into the wider Education Policy of 2076, which was a critical merger. This consolidation was a significant step toward mainstreaming inclusive approaches into the larger educational structure. In addition, an education sector study focused on disability inclusion was launched, demonstrating a commitment to recognizing and tackling the unique issues encountered by people with disabilities in the educational setting. Throughout this timeline, the Nepal MICS's adoption of the Working Group Questionnaire (WGQ) in an undisclosed year demonstrated a commitment to gathering critical data and insights to enhance inclusive education policies and practices. These temporal achievements, taken together, indicate Nepal's developing commitment to establishing an inclusive education system that values diversity and provides equitable opportunity for everyone.

Sections 10.28.01 to 10.28.09 of Nepal's Education Policy 2076 are exemplary in highlighting the need for inclusive education and acknowledging the various needs of learners with disabilities. The policy emphasizes the need to build an inclusive learning environment and recognizes teachers' and educators' roles in this process. It emphasizes the need for stakeholder engagement while emphasizing the communal responsibility for inclusion. Finally, the 2015 Nepalese Constitution included provisions aimed at protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities, encompassing rights to education, employment, and social integration. These constitutional measures played a pivotal role in promoting parity in rights and opportunities for individuals with disabilities across various facets of society [2]. However, the policy falls short in providing clear strategies and plans for inclusive education implementation. Specific metrics and resources for addressing various types and degrees of disability are not completely developed, resulting in a gap in the comprehensive support system necessary for varied learners. Concrete steps to take away physical and social impediments to equal opportunity may also require further details. Furthermore, while the policy emphasizes the significance of research and innovation in enhancing inclusion, particular research programs and creative practices are not described in depth. A more complete approach, particularly in identifying teacher training and support systems, defining collaborative strategies, and outlining research efforts, would improve the policy's efficacy in promoting inclusive education.

This policy review has two goals: to critically assess and improve the transformational potential of the present policy's emphasis on inclusive education. The initial focus of the study is on how to integrate the policy's emphasis on inclusive education into actual strategies and extensive implementation plans. Recognizing the need for inclusive education is essential, but without concrete and well-defined initiatives, it can be the pedagogical practice and systematic discrimination [3], advocating for collaboration, community links, and evidence use [4]. This part of the study is critical for bridging the theoretical recognition and practical implementation gap, ensuring that inclusive education becomes a tangible reality within the educational environment [5, 6]. The second critical area of investigation is on determining how the policy may develop specific indicators and efficiently allocate resources to fulfill the different requirements of learners with disabilities. Given that learners with disabilities have distinct and specific demands, the lack of clear measures and committed resources may result in unfulfilled needs, resulting in exclusion and injustice based on the needs and justice approach [7]. The review intends to contribute to constructing an inclusive and equitable learning environment by analyzing the policy's success in providing specified indicators and allocating resources. In doing so, it tries to guarantee that the policy is not only aspirational but also operational, addressing the unique needs of disabled learners and developing a truly inclusive educational system. In a study conducted by Slee, R. (2011) [8], the author highlights the significance of analyzing education policies to ensure they contribute effectively to constructing inclusive and equitable learning environments. The research emphasizes the importance of policies providing specific indicators and allocating resources to address the unique needs of disabled learners, thereby fostering a genuinely inclusive educational system.

As a tool for strategic planning, SWOT analysis assists in identifying a subject's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. SWOT analysis can be utilized to assess the present condition of inclusive education and pinpoint potential areas for enhancement. Inclusive education in the country can facilitate more independent learning for children with special needs and allow them to be guided alongside typically developing children, according to a SWOT analysis (Strengths). However, about curriculum, lesson plans, media, and assessment, different children with disabilities necessitate distinct forms of guidance and support (Weaknesses). The government provides support for inclusive education programs through the issuance of special laws and regulations about their implementation. It influences the mental and psychological development of children with special needs, which can be enhanced through their integration with typically developing children (Opportunities) [9, 10]. In conclusion, it should be possible for the government and inclusive education provider schools to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and service quality of inclusive education (Threats).

The Inclusive Education Policy of Nepal is supported by

robust legislative frameworks such as the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Consolidated Equity Strategy, 2014, indicating a strong commitment to fostering fairness and impartiality. However, the policy encounters challenge due to shortcomings in implementation strategies, lack of specific measures for various disabilities, and inadequate approaches to address physical and social barriers. Additionally, the policy lacks detailed programs focusing on research and innovation, which limits its potential effectiveness. Prospects for cooperation and the resolution of practical obstacles present chances for advancement; nevertheless, the risks of marginalization and operational complexities emphasize the necessity for focused endeavors to guarantee the policy's efficacy in cultivating an authentically inclusive academic milieu.

2. Methodology

The review of inclusive education under Nepal's education policy is undertaken in this article by an assessment of three unique forms of information: current policy, relevant policy, and published papers. A detailed evaluation of existing policy is conducted, including the Education Policy of Nepal 2076, the Nepal Constitution, and the 15th and 16th National Periodic Plans. Similarly, examining relevant policy entails digging into prior policy changes, international treaties, and declarations. The dedication to international standards is notable, as seen by the acceptance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990 and the subsequent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol in 2010. The Education Act of 1971 provided the legislative foundation for education, which was supplemented by later policies such as the Special Education Policy in 1996 and the National Policy and Plan of Action on Disability in 2006. Legislative acts such as The Act Relating to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2017) and The Act Relating to Compulsory and Free Education (2019) demonstrate a modern commitment to ensuring the rights and access of people with disabilities, with the National Education Policy of 2076 serving as a comprehensive guide for the education sector, most likely incorporating principles of inclusivity and equitable access.

The third review conducts a systematic examination of several published papers that address significant research topics connected to inclusive education. The concepts extracted from these articles are divided into several categories or codes, which are then summarized into three primary themes: policy context, policy implementation and current structure, and a SWOT analysis of the policy. This method seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of inclusive education in Nepal by synthesizing information from various sources, shedding light on the contextual landscape and implementation mechanisms, and an assessment of the policy's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats using the SWOT analysis methods for the better decision making [11]. The purpose of this multifaceted review is to contribute to a

comprehensive understanding of inclusive education within Nepal's educational policy framework.

In order to conduct a thorough assessment of Nepal's inclusive education policies outlined in this article, two critical theoretical frameworks are used: Policy Implementation Theory and SWOT Analysis Theory. These conceptual lenses have the potential to shed light on the complexities underlying the efficacy and obstacles inherent in Nepal's inclusive education environment [12]. Policy Implementation Theory, a foundational concept in public policy studies, will be used to analyze the subtle processes involved in turning policy language into real acts [13]. By utilizing Policy Implementation Theory, the evaluation assesses how effectively Nepal's inclusive education policies are being put into practice, considering factors such as resource allocation, stakeholder collaboration, institutional capacity, and accountability mechanisms. This paradigm tries to bridge the gap between policy purpose and on-the-ground outcomes by examining aspects such as institutional capability, stakeholder involvement, and resource allocation. Concurrently, the evaluation will employ SWOT Analysis Theory as a strategic planning tool, methodically examining the policies' internal strengths and weaknesses and determining external opportunities and dangers within the socio-political context [14]. This dual-theoretical approach seeks to provide a comprehensive and nuanced evaluation, providing insights that not only identify areas of success and challenge but also provide strategic recommendations to strengthen Nepal's commitment to inclusive education, bridging the gap between policy aspirations and real-world impact.

3. Finding

According to Nepal's Disabled Protection and Welfare Act, 1982, a person with a disability is defined as a Nepali citizen who is either physically or mentally unable or handicapped to do normal daily lifework, who is blind, deaf, dull, has a crippled limb, is lame and handicapped with one leg broken, or is handicapped with one hand broken, or is feeble-minded [15-17].

Inclusive education and pedagogy strive to eradicate school and social exclusion by engaging all students in meaningful and accessible learning [18]. As previously stated, this strategy necessitates a shift in focus from changing handicapped persons to modifying society via attitude changes, obstacle reduction, and appropriate assistance [19, 20]. Demonstrates the significance of inclusive education in meeting the learning requirements of all students, particularly those at risk of marginalization [21]. Creating an inclusive atmosphere also entails understanding and accepting cultural diversity, respecting different learning and communication styles, and encouraging open and honest conversation.

According to the preceding literature, inclusive education, as defined by literature, entails including persons with disabilities in day-to-day lifework. This includes those who have

physical or mental disabilities. In the larger literature, inclusive education is viewed as a method for eradicating school and social exclusion, with an emphasis on meaningful and accessible learning experiences for all children. This transformational strategy focuses on societal change through attitude adjustments, barrier reduction, and help, while also fulfilling students' different learning requirements and developing cultural acceptance and open communication.

Education for all is a worldwide concern and a common obligation. UNESCO believes that every learner is equal and aims to identify and eradicate all barriers to education. Curriculum, pedagogy, and teaching are all part of this [1]. The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), as well as Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, govern UNESCO's efforts in this field, emphasizing inclusion and equity as the cornerstone for excellent education [22].

A new paper published in the Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities presents insights from case studies in Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, and China on the history of inclusive education policy in various nations [22]. The article examines these nations for common themes about the education of kids with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), noting similarities, problems, and new issues. While the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and later comments clearly define inclusive education and the conceptual distinction between integration and segregation, the terminology employed in certain nations is contradictory with these definitions [23]. This complicates the interpretation of reports from government agencies. In certain circumstances, a misunderstanding of language allows for the justification of behaviors that violate the UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education. Terminology variations, along with the problems of locating data on the education of children with IDD, make a regional examination of progress toward inclusive education challenging. The article discusses frequent difficulties and makes recommendations for the next steps based on past assessments and reports [22].

The Nepalese National Education Policy 2076 includes measures for inclusive education. The policy strives to make education equal and accessible to all inhabitants of the country. The policy also provides the right to education to all Nepalese citizens, especially those with disabilities, marginalized communities, and from low-income families. The Inclusive and Special Education Policy 10.28 mandates the provision of inclusive and special education opportunities to fulfill the learning requirements of children with disabilities, as well as the adaptation of curriculum and curricula for developing life skills and vocational skills [24]. The Nepal School Education Sector Plan, which runs from July 2022 to 2030, strengthens inclusive education by including targets for scaling up inclusive education schools and transforming the 380 existing resource classes into inclusive education resource hubs for schools within their respective local governments [25].

3.1. Inclusive Education and Legislative Role

Legislation is critical in furthering inclusive education because it fosters a shared understanding of fundamental ideas such as equality and inclusion. Effective policies and legal frameworks, according to the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), need a common understanding among stakeholders at all levels of the education system [26]. Legislation can help to provide equal access to excellent education for all students, regardless of their background or skills, including those with disabilities, from disadvantaged groups, or from low-income families. Furthermore, legal measures may provide critical support for teachers and education professionals, ensuring they have the knowledge and resources needed to adopt inclusive education methods. This holistic approach to legislation is critical for fostering an educational climate that values diversity and encourages equitable opportunity for all students.

Further, according to the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), effective policies and legal frameworks are needed to ensure equal access to quality education for all students, regardless of background or skills, including those with disabilities, from disadvantaged groups, or low-income families. The Maldives, for example, has recently developed an Inclusive Education Policy under Article 8 (d) of Act No. 24/2020 (Education Act) of the Ministry of Education, to ensure the rights of all students to education, to provide equal and equitable opportunities for all categories of students with complex learning profiles in pre-schools, primary schools, secondary and higher education schools, and to promote the full development of all their abilities and potential [26, 27]. The policy is intended for children who have complex learning profiles, as defined in Article 6 of this policy [1]. The policy establishes an education system with a conducive environment that facilitates equal opportunities for all categories of students described in this policy to acquire skills, play sports, and participate in extra-curricular activities. The policy is founded on concepts such as diversity and inclusion, dedicated leadership, a whole-school approach, engagement with the school community, and a multi-sectoral approach [26].

Nepal is making tremendous progress toward inclusive representation and human rights protection, connecting its efforts with the SDGs and a human rights perspective. The government is actively developing measures to combat the political marginalization of people with disabilities (PWDs). Article 86 of the Constitution ensures equal chances for political involvement by enabling PWDs to run for office and join political parties and assemblies. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) enhances these rights by stressing equitable participation in political and public life for people with disabilities. Despite these attempts, obstacles such as physical accessibility impediments, a dearth of disability-inclusive policies in party manifestos, and social attitudes that perpetuate prejudice remain.

To solve representation disparities, a focus on accessibility, inclusive party laws, and manifestos that expressly mention people with disabilities must be prioritized. Actively incorporating PWDs in policy-making processes, recognizing their leadership potential, and enacting affirmative action legislation can all help to increase political diversity. Collaboration with organizations of people with disabilities (OPDs) is critical, as is ensuring that political information is easily available for their effective involvement. The establishment of procedures to monitor policy implementation and the execution of frequent reviews would aid in tracking progress and addressing difficulties in disability inclusion.

Nepal's march toward a more inclusive political landscape necessitates comprehensive measures to include the views and rights of people with disabilities. Upholding human rights, attaining the SDGs, and implementing the CRPD's principles need collaborative efforts to ensure that everyone's potential and contributions are recognized, regardless of skills or impairments.

3.2. Inclusion in Curriculum and Materials

An inclusive curriculum provides for a wide range of content, materials, concepts, and assessment techniques. It entails actively including ideas that broaden and improve the canon, both within individual articles and across the course [28]. Education for all is a worldwide concern and a common obligation. UNESCO believes that every learner is equal and aims to identify and eradicate all barriers to education. Curriculum, pedagogy, and teaching are all part of this. The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), as well as Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, govern UNESCO's efforts in this field, emphasizing inclusion and equity as the cornerstone for excellent education [29].

Following developed framework support to clarify the framework for inclusive excellence with the five dimensions [30].

Learning materials selection and modification are critical for effective teaching, especially in the context of inclusive pedagogy [31]. Furthermore, an inclusive approach across the curriculum, including essential disciplines like reading, mathematics, science, social studies, and the arts [32]. As previously noted, integrated curricular models can assist in instilling critical skills in the classroom, particularly for kids with special needs [32]. Emphasizes the significance of learning resources, implying that they are more than merely tools to the educational process [33]. According to the author's concept above, inclusive materials are carefully selected or adjusted critically for effective teaching within inclusive pedagogy. These include a wide range of topics, emphasizing integrated curricular approaches that help children with special needs. These resources, besides being tools, also play a significant role in holistic educational development, establishing an inclusive learning environment for all.

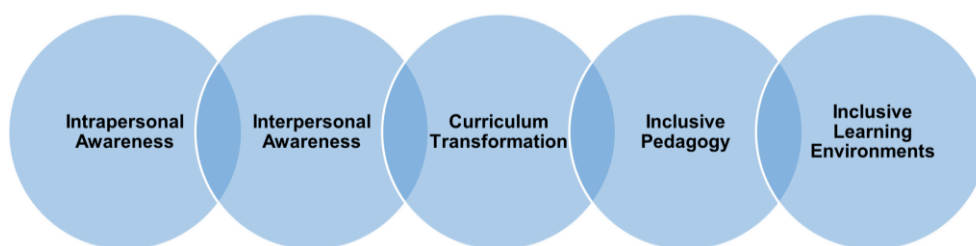


Figure 1. Five dimensions of inclusive excellence.

Education for all is a worldwide concern and a common obligation. UNESCO believes that every learner is equal and aims to identify and eradicate all barriers to education. Curriculum, pedagogy, and teaching are all part of this [34]. The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), as well as Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, govern UNESCO's efforts in this field, emphasizing inclusion and equity as the cornerstone for effective education. In Nepal, the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) is in charge of developing and implementing the national curriculum framework. The CDC has issued various curriculum development rules and recommendations, including the National Curriculum Framework 2076 (Second Edition).

There are various barriers to adopt inclusive education in Nepal, according to an article published on my Republica by Jalasa Sapkota. These are some examples: There is a shortage of trained special educators, and a shortage of human resources makes it difficult to provide critical assistance and tailored interventions to kids with impairments. Inadequate resources: Many schools continue to struggle to get adequate materials for all kids with disabilities. Specialized equipment, braille texts, and audio programs are examples of this [2]. Provisions contradict each other: The 2019 National Education Policy (2076 BS) has policies that contravene the values expressed in the 2017 Inclusive Education Policy [35]. The current National Education Policy overrides these prior policies and, under Policy number (G), encompasses both inclusive and special education. However, the strategy fails to differentiate sufficiently between special education and inclusive education, rendering it in violation of Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

In Nepal, inclusive education emphasizes a commitment to delivering equal and high-quality education to all students, regardless of their skills or impairments. The constitution, approved in 2015, establishes education as a basic right, emphasizing the need of an inclusive, nondiscriminatory system [35]. However, the decentralized education system, which is now governed by local governments, poses obstacles, particularly for students who experience economic disparities, live in remote locations, or belong to disadvantaged groups.

While embracing inclusive and special education, the 2019 National Education Policy has contradictory elements that depart from the concepts articulated in the 2017 Inclusive

Education Policy. This disparity raises questions regarding the successful implementation of inclusive approaches. Despite these obstacles, Nepal has committed to global initiatives such as the Incheon Declaration, aligning its educational priority with SDG 4. The government has incorporated these promises into its Fifteenth Plan, which outlines concrete aims for improving quality and equity in education for students with disabilities.

However, various barriers impede Nepal's successful implementation of inclusive education. Students with disabilities experience stigma and prejudice due to a lack of infrastructure and resources, as well as deep-seated cultural attitudes and belief systems. Teacher preparation and support, policy implementation gaps, socioeconomic inequities, and the lack of an inclusive curriculum and evaluation methodologies exacerbate these issues. To solve these difficulties, a comprehensive approach that includes infrastructural improvements, awareness campaigns, targeted teacher training, and policies that bridge socioeconomic divides and encourage inclusion is required [35].

Overcoming these obstacles necessitates a commitment to creating a more inclusive educational environment. Infrastructure investments, awareness campaigns, and targeted regulations can assist in closely addressing disparities in education, particularly for underrepresented populations. Increasing teacher readiness via training programs, resolving policy implementation challenges, and supporting inclusion in curriculum creation are all critical steps toward fulfilling inclusive education's transformational potential in Nepal. As the country complies with international obligations, collaborative efforts are required to turn the goal of inclusive education a reality, thereby propelling the country toward social development and prosperity.

3.3. Literacy and Vocational Training for Disabilities in Nepal

Inclusive education and vocational training are critical for ensuring that all persons, regardless of background or ability, have equitable access to education and work possibilities. Inclusive vocational training entails addressing and responding to learners' diverse learning and cultural needs, as well as removing barriers to education through accommodation and

the provision of relevant structures and curricula that allow the learner to gain the most benefit from school attendance [36]. Several initiatives and programs are being launched to enhance inclusive education and vocational training. For example, EQUAL vet is a European Union-funded Erasmus+ vocational training project for persons with intellectual disability. The project's goal is to provide deliverables in three years that will assist VTC trainers, trainees with intellectual impairments, accreditation agencies, and policymakers [37]. The United Nations has also established a goal of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting opportunities for lifelong learning for everyone by 2030 [38].

Firstly, in Australia, the adoption of vocational education and training (VET) in secondary schools has been a policy emphasis, with a large rise in student engagement [39]. However, creating this dimension inside traditional certification and accrediting institutions is a difficulty [40]. In Zimbabwe, the emphasis on TVET has been motivated by the need to modernize the technical workforce and solve graduate unemployment through the implementation of a two-pathway education framework. Despite efforts to apply the Brazilian National Curricular Guidelines for Technical and Vocational Education, the effect of many factors on instructors' practices has been a serious difficulty [41].

Further, inclusive education and vocational training are critical for offering equitable opportunities, regardless of background or ability. Initiatives such as aim to empower people with intellectual disability. The United Nations has set a global goal of inclusive and high-quality education by 2030. While Australia has seen increasing student participation through vocational education, Zimbabwe and Brazil are experiencing difficulties in establishing technical and vocational education frameworks. These initiatives emphasize the necessity of breaking down barriers to establish an inclusive and accessible educational environment for all.

Various studies have emphasized the difficulties encountered by individuals with disabilities in Nepal, specifically about vocational training and literacy. Junior and Borges [42] and Adhikari [43] emphasize the necessity of implementing vocational training programs that are more inclusive. Adhikari specifically highlights the challenges encountered by learners with disabilities in mainstream vocational training. Järnhammer also underscores the significance of vocational education in enhancing the socio-economic standing of individuals with physical disabilities. Additionally, Järnhammer emphasizes the high occurrence of disability among the most impoverished populations in Nepal, underscoring the necessity for specific assistance in this domain [44]. Sharmila et al. examines the changing conversation about literacy and development in Nepal, emphasizing the importance of a more sophisticated comprehension of literacy and its ability to empower individuals with disabilities [45].

A study conducted in Nepal has brought attention to the difficulties encountered by individuals with disabilities when it comes to accessing vocational training and literacy pro-

grams. According to Click or tap here to enter text., learners with disabilities experienced challenges in traveling to training centers and encountered difficulties in socializing. According to Jarnhammer, individuals with disabilities, especially those living in poverty, face a significant lack of access to services, such as rehabilitation. Robinson [46] conducted a comparative analysis of non-formal education methods for women to determine their effectiveness in acquiring literacy skills and health knowledge. The study highlighted the importance of developing customized programs for individuals with disabilities. C. A. Smith [47] highlighted the significance of providing teachers with specialized training focused on disabilities to enhance the integration of visually impaired students into regular classrooms. These studies emphasize the necessity of implementing vocational training and literacy programs that are inclusive and accessible for individuals with disabilities in Nepal.

3.4. Inclusive Education Policy Implementation in Nepal

The execution of inclusive education policies is an intricate procedure that necessitates synchronization with the fundamental principles [48]. The process entails societal transformation and the elimination of obstacles to facilitate optimal learning and active participation for all children [49]. Despite the dedication to promoting inclusive education, there continue to be enduring disparities in both educational and social aspects, suggesting an inconsistent application of policies and practices [19]. Practical challenges related to the execution of these policies involve apprehensions regarding the integration of students with special educational requirements into regular schools [5].

Nepal encounters numerous obstacles in the execution of inclusive education policies. Neupane emphasizes the necessity of adopting a pragmatic approach to the development of education, whereas Shiwakoti identifies insufficient human resources, budget allocation, and awareness as significant barriers [12]. Singh Thagunna highlights the significance of school psychologists in establishing an all-encompassing atmosphere, while Florian emphasizes the value of advancing diversity and social justice in inclusive educational approaches [50]. These studies emphasize the necessity of a thorough and synchronized strategy for policy implementation, with an emphasis on distributing resources, raising awareness, and involving important stakeholders.

Nepal encounters numerous obstacles in the implementation of its inclusive education policy. According to Shiwakoti, significant barriers include insufficient human resources, financial limitations, and limited awareness [12]. Neupane underscores the necessity of a comprehensive policy framework that considers the heterogeneous nature of Nepali society. A critical perspective on the implementation of donor-led models of inclusive education, advocating for a more nuanced comprehension of the specific local circumstances [51].

Maudslay emphasizes the intricate interaction between school and community elements, specifically for marginalized groups such as Dalit children, in attaining inclusive education [52]. These studies emphasize the necessity of adopting a comprehensive and situation-specific strategy for implementing inclusive education policies in Nepal.

The effective implementation of inclusive education in Nepal is influenced by a variety of factors. Dawadi identifies various barriers that hinder inclusivity, such as contextual factors, and organizational factors, including spirituality, caste, and policy [53]. On the other hand, Thagunna highlights the significance of school psychologists in fostering an inclusive environment. Shahi emphasizes the necessity of adopting inclusive attitudes and practices, specifically in the field of technical and vocational education. The results align with the research conducted by Johnstone in Lesotho, highlighting the significance of teacher expertise and favorable attitudes [54]. Hence, the achievement of inclusive education in Nepal relies on overcoming contextual and organizational obstacles, utilizing the knowledge and skills of school psychologists, and fostering inclusive mindsets and behaviors, especially in technical and vocational education.

4. Recommendation

To ensure the success of inclusive education in Nepal, it is crucial to prioritize the development of curriculum and learning materials. The current policy acknowledges the significance of adaptation but lacks efficacy in its execution. To address this disparity, it is necessary to create a thorough strategy for the development of an inclusive curriculum, in partnership with the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC). This plan should prioritize materials that are both easily obtainable and culturally meaningful, to cater to the varied educational requirements of students with disabilities. The primary goals of this initiative should be to address concerns of materials availability and to resolve any inconsistencies in the National Education Policy. The three levels of government need to implement initiatives aimed at promoting inclusive attitudes and practices within technical and vocational education settings. This could involve integrating disability awareness training into curriculum design, providing support services for students with disabilities, and creating inclusive learning environments that accommodate diverse learning needs.

An important deficiency highlighted in the literature is the lack of adequately trained special educators, which is impeding the advancement of inclusive education. To meet the requirements of inclusive education, it is imperative to establish a comprehensive teacher training program on a national scale. This program should include modules that address various learning needs, employ adaptable teaching methods, and effectively utilize assistive technologies. Furthermore, it is imperative to establish support mechanisms, such as mentorship programs, to aid teachers in effectively incorporating

inclusive practices into their classrooms. This recommendation seeks to strengthen the basis of inclusive education in Nepal by tackling the lack of qualified educators and offering continuous support.

The contradictions between the 2019 National Education Policy and the 2017 Inclusive Education Policy led to confusion and possible breaches of international conventions. To address this issue, it is advisable to conduct a thorough evaluation of all education policies. The objective is to guarantee uniformity and congruence with global benchmarks, specifically the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). To prevent potential conflicts, it is important to clearly define policies that distinguish between special education and inclusive education. The objective of this harmonization endeavor is to establish a coherent and unified policy structure that facilitates the comprehensive implementation of inclusive education nationwide.

Although current policies establish a basic structure, legislative backing for inclusive education requires improvement in order to address identified obstacles. This recommendation proposes the creation and implementation of laws that explicitly endorse inclusive education. The legislation ought to apportion resources, tackle infrastructure requirements, and enforce measures to counteract stigma and prejudice. It is essential to involve a wide range of individuals, including those with disabilities, in the legislative process to guarantee that the laws passed are comprehensive and representative of the various requirements of the population. The primary objective of this comprehensive legislative approach is to establish a robust legal framework for inclusive education in Nepal. This framework will be in line with global initiatives and will guarantee ongoing enhancements.

By integrating both theories, the evaluation aims to provide a holistic assessment of Nepal's inclusive education landscape, highlighting not only the strengths and weaknesses of existing policies but also the opportunities for improvement and potential threats to successful implementation. The strategic recommendations derived from this dual-theoretical approach bridge the gap between policy aspirations and real-world impact, facilitating the development of more effective strategies to advance inclusive education in Nepal.

5. Conclusion

To summarize, the evaluation of Nepal's inclusive education policies, based on the frameworks of Policy Implementation Theory and SWOT Analysis, uncovers a multifaceted situation characterized by notable progress and persistent difficulties. The Disabled Protection and Welfare Act of 1982 provides a clear definition of disability, which serves as the basis for promoting inclusive education. Yet, the ability of inclusive education to bring about profound change relies on a fundamental shift in thinking, prioritizing societal transformation through changed mindsets, decreased obstacles, and sufficient assistance. Nepal's policies, such as the National

Education Policy 2076 and the Inclusive and Special Education Policy 10.28, align with the global commitment to inclusive education advocated by UNESCO and enshrined in international conventions.

Nevertheless, there are ongoing obstacles that need to be addressed, including inconsistencies in terminology and conflicting policies, as well as practical hindrances such as a scarcity of qualified educators and insufficient resources. The discrepancies in the understanding and execution of policies underscore the necessity for a unified and all-encompassing legislative structure. The curriculum is crucial in achieving inclusive excellence. This requires expanding and enhancing the range of texts and learning materials used. The 2019 National Education Policy, despite including measures to promote inclusivity, faces contradictions that require a comprehensive assessment to ensure compliance with international standards.

To address these challenges, it is crucial to adopt a comprehensive and diverse strategy. First and foremost, it is essential to tackle the lack of skilled special educators by implementing a nationwide teacher training program. This is vital in order to ensure the success of inclusive education. This should encompass a wide range of learning needs, flexible teaching methods, and programs that provide guidance and support. Furthermore, it is imperative to prioritize the creation of an inclusive curriculum that is culturally relevant and easily accessible, in collaboration with the Curriculum Development Centre. Furthermore, it is crucial to enact legislative reforms that explicitly endorse and promote inclusive education. These reforms should involve the allocation of resources, addressing infrastructure requirements, and combating the negative perception associated with it.

Essentially, the potential for transformation through inclusive education in Nepal is found in the collective implementation of these recommendations. An organized and focused endeavor to address disparities in resources, training, and legislation can drive the country toward a more inclusive educational environment, in line with international standards and guarantee fair opportunities for everyone, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds. To achieve the goal of inclusive education and contribute to Nepal's social development and prosperity, it is crucial for collaborative efforts and long-term dedication to be maintained.

Abbreviations

CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
EMIS	Education Management Information System
IDD	Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
OPD	Organization for People for Disabilities
PWD	People with Disabilities
SWOT	Strength Weakness Opportunities Threats
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

VET	Vocational Education and Training
WGQ	Working Group Questionnaire

Author Contributions

Peshal Kumar Puri: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Funding acquisition, Methodology, Project administration, Software, Supervision, Validation, Writing – original draft

Bal Mukunda Mahat: Formal Analysis, Methodology, Supervision, Writing – review & editing

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Appendix

Special and Inclusive part under the Education Policy 2076.
In Nepali

समावेशी र विशेष शिक्षा

नीति १०. २८ अपाङ्गता भएका बालबालिकाहरूको सिकाइ आवश्यकता पूरा गर्न समावेशी शिक्षा एवं विशेष शिक्षाका अवसर प्रदान गर्ने र जीवनोपयोगी तथा व्यावसायिक सीप विकासका लागि पाठ्यक्रम तथा पाठ्यसामग्रीमा अनुकूलन गर्ने ।

1. अपाङ्गता भएका, अशक्त र घरबाट विद्यालय आवतजावत गर्न असमर्थ तर विद्यालयमा अध्ययन गर्न सक्ने बालबालिकाका लागि पायक पर्ने स्थानमा आवश्यकताको आधारमा छात्रावाससहितको “विशेष विद्यालय” सञ्चालन गरिनेछ ।
2. अपाङ्गता भएका बालबालिकाहरूको अपाङ्गताको अवस्था हेरी सम्भव भएसम्म अन्य बालबालिकाहरूसँगै बसेर सिक्न पाउने गरी समावेशी शिक्षाको व्यवस्था गरिनेछ ।
3. अपाङ्गता तथा फरक क्षमता भएका बालबालिकाहरूलाई आत्मनिर्भर बनाउनका लागि व्यावसायिक सीप सिक्ने अवसर प्रदान गरिनेछ ।
4. साधारण अवस्थाका बालबालिकासँग बसेर अध्ययन गर्न सक्ने अपाङ्गता भएका बालबालिकाहरूका लागि अपाङ्गताको प्रकृति र स्तर अनुसार आवश्यक पर्ने सामग्रीहरू (जस्तै: हवील चेयर, छडी, ब्रेल पुस्तक, सांकेतिक चित्र आदि) को समुचित प्रबन्ध गरिनेछ ।
5. सबै प्रकारका अपाङ्गता भएका बालबालिकाहरू (शारीरिक

अपाङ्गता, सुनाइ अपाङ्गता, दृष्टि अपाङ्गता, स्वर र बोलाई अपाङ्गता, मानसिक वा मनोसामाजिक अपाङ्गता, बौद्धिक अपाङ्गता, अनुवंशीय रक्तश्राव (हेमोफिलिया) सम्बन्धी अपाङ्गता, अटिजम अपाङ्गता र बहु अपाङ्गता) को पठनपाठनमा सहजता ल्याउन शारीरिक तथा बौद्धिक क्षमता अनुसारको अपाङ्गमैत्री भौतिक पूर्वाधार तथा सिकाइ वातावरणको प्रबन्ध गरिनेछ ।

6. सबै बालबालिकालाई सक्षम बनाउन बालबालिकाहरूको अवस्था र प्रकृति हेरी विशेष कक्षा तथा सुधारात्मक कक्षाको व्यवस्था मिलाइनेछ । अपाङ्गता भएका बालबालिका तथा व्यक्तिहरूको शिक्षा पाउने अधिकारलाई सुनिश्चित गर्न आवश्यक पाठ्यक्रम, पाठ्यपुस्तक तथा श्रव्य दृश्य र सहयोग सामग्रीमा विविधीकरण गरिनेछ ।
7. सुस्त श्रवण भएका बालबालिकालाई साङ्केतिक भाषा तथा दृष्टिविहिन र न्यून दृष्टि भएका बालबालिकालाई ब्रेल लिपिमा मात्र सीमित नगराई अन्य उपकरणको प्रयोगबाट सिक्न सक्ने सम्भाव्य विकल्पको खोजी गरी उपयुक्त अवसर प्रदान गरिनेछ ।
8. अपाङ्गताको प्रकृति अनुसार लचिलो पाठ्यक्रम तथा पाठ्यपुस्तक, वैकल्पिक सिकाइ सामग्री तथा शिक्षण विधिमा जोड दिनुको साथै विद्यार्थी मूल्याङ्कन प्रणालीलाई अपाङ्गता भएका बालबालिका अनुकूल बनाइनेछ ।

In English

(Chha) Special and Inclusive Education

Policy 10.28 Ensuring the Academic Success of Children Experiencing Disabilities. In order to facilitate access to special education and inclusive education For the development of professional and life skills Curriculum and curriculum adaptation.

1. "Special schools" featuring dormitories will be established in accordance with the requirements for children who are unable to commute to school but have the capacity to learn at school, including those with disabilities.
2. To the greatest extent possible, inclusive education will be organized to enable children with disabilities to sit and learn alongside typically developing peers.
3. Opportunities will be provided for children with disabilities and those with different abilities to acquire vocational skills that will foster their independence.
4. In the case of children with disabilities who are capable of studying alongside typically developing children, the essential resources (including but not limited to wheelchairs, canes, Braille books, sign pictures, and so forth) will be made available to them in accordance with the

nature and severity of their disability.

5. The objective is to promote educational opportunities for children who have a wide range of disabilities, including but not limited to physical, hearing, visual, speech and voice impairments, mental and psychosocial disorders, intellectual disabilities, hereditary bleeding disorders (such as hemophilia), autism spectrum disorder, and multiple disabilities.
6. Physical infrastructure and a learning environment that are accessible to individuals with disabilities will be designed in accordance with their abilities.
7. To enable every child, special and remedial classes will be organized in accordance with their individual characteristics and conditions. In order to safeguard the educational rights of children and individuals with disabilities, efforts will be made to diversify essential curriculum, textbooks, audiovisual materials, and support resources.
8. Appropriate opportunities will be provided for children with slow hearing to learn sign language, and blind and visually impaired children will not be restricted to Braille alone but will also have the chance to learn through the use of alternative tools.
9. A flexible curriculum and textbooks, alternative learning materials and teaching methods, and an adapted student evaluation system will be prioritized for children with disabilities, by the nature of their disability.

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Biography



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