

DECLARATION

**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
FOR DISABLED CHILDREN IN SRI LANKA:
ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

Signature of Candidate

Date

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2007/MDS/19**

Supervisors Declaration

I confirm that I have seen the final draft of the thesis by the above named student and I believe the thesis to be the sole work of the candidate and in a suitable form for

MASTERS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES - 2007/2008

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ABSTRACT

Inclusion is a process relevant to all children in a school where disabled children too given opportunity to study in a normal school. Based particularly on the performance of the disabled groups who have historically been marginalized or have underachieved in traditional schools, the concept of inclusive education emerged in the last quarter of the 20th century, and was promoted by international conventions. In keeping with world trends, Sri Lanka has implemented the concept of inclusive education using different intervention programmes but the present position was not studied in depth to access the knowledge, attainments.

The specific objectives of the present study were to synthesize secondary data on disabled children's education; to identify the prevalence situation; to review the educational policy on inclusive education; and to find out parent' and teacher' perceptions on the issue. The Survey Research method was used. Focus group interviews and case studies on eight children were conducted using the data collection techniques. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics. According to the findings, there was no proper policy to specifically address the issue of admitting children with disabilities to schools. No balanced policy to cover all types of disabilities was observed. Lack of awareness and negative attitudes among school and other communities concerning disabled children was evident. There is a gap between policies and practices on disabled children. No curriculum policy to address all types of disabilities was seen. No proper method for evaluation and monitoring of educational programmes for disabled children also was observed. Lack of physical and human facilities resulted in poor achievements of children with disabilities. Lack of coordination among institutions hinders the development of children with disabilities.

The study suggests the importance of clarifying and revising the existing policy, introducing an education policy for quality education and implementing it in the beneficiary friendly manner. Policies and programmes should be formulated and implemented for the children in the age group of 0-10. Government organizations must reconsider their policies and practices concerning disabled children. Importance of strengthening links between families of disabled children and organizations has been stressed as a necessity.