

Research Article

Cite this article: Das, S., & Alam, M. M. (2025). Disability and Representation in the School Curriculum: A Study of NCERT English Textbooks up to the Middle School Level. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 18, e2025496.
<https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2025.18.496>

Received July 16, 2025

Accepted September 28, 2025

Keywords: Disability, education, representation, textbook, NCERT

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Disability and Representation in the School Curriculum: A Study of NCERT English Textbooks up to the Middle School Level

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Abstract

Background/purpose. By representing the diverse experiential and affective realities of disabled people and exemplifying the possibility of their synergetic and symbiotic relationships with non-disabled individuals, textbooks can function as tools of sensitization to address prejudiced attitudes that hinder the achievement of inclusive education goals. Considering such potential of textbooks, this paper studies the nature and scope of representations of disability and disabled people in textbooks for English (from Class I to VIII) prescribed in the NCERT syllabus of India.

Materials/methods. This article begins with a macro analysis to locate and bracket textbook portions that involve verbal and visual depictions of disabled individuals and disability. It will help determine how much space textbooks allocate to disabled people's experiences and emotions, and how well they depict these experiences. In the second phase, microanalysis, the representations will be qualitatively evaluated at the contextual, rhetorical, and thematic levels to determine whether they accurately depict the diverse life experiences of disabled people or are simply opportunistic, metaphorical devices or narrative crutches used to elicit a cathartic response in a different storyline.

Results. It finds out that these textbooks have failed to accommodate much space for such representations and lack consistency; the representations also fail to exhibit heterogeneity because of oversimplifying disability experiences through clichéd verbo-visual tropes that symbolize impairments.

Conclusion. In conclusion, this paper provides several recommendations to help Indian educators and textbook editors mainstream disability in standard school textbooks, making those representations more inclusive of diverse groups.

1. Introduction

1.1. Inclusive Education

Inclusion embodies a significant philosophical perspective that recognizes the inherent value of each individual's contributions and upholds the essential right to belonging for all individuals (Slee, 2019). Documents from UNESCO indicate that the concept of inclusion emerged as a pivotal pedagogical approach during the 1994 World Conference on Special Needs Education, held in Salamanca (UNESCO, 1994). The expansion of the Salamanca Declaration led to the 'Education for All' initiative (UNESCO, 2000), which asserts that incorporating all children into mainstream educational settings is the most effective strategy for combating discrimination and achieving inclusive education. Educational inclusion is founded on the principle that every child, irrespective of social class, nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, caste, gender, sexual orientation, age, or physical abilities, inherently possesses the ability to learn and reach their utmost potential. This is contingent upon fair educational engagement, bolstered by resources customized to meet individual requirements and implemented through cohesive teaching strategies. Inclusive education, often referred to as 'Education for All', promotes equitable engagement within the educational framework for marginalized learners who regularly face discrimination and are susceptible to social exclusion (Alam, 2025; Haug, 2017; Puri & Abraham, 2004; Thomas, 2013).

1.2. Inclusive Education and Disability

The framework of inclusive education has distinctly positioned itself as a vital resource for disabled children, functioning not merely as a goal in its own right but also as a catalyst for cultivating a broader societal appreciation of diversity and the complexities surrounding disability (Lindsay, 2003; Rodriguez, 2019). The concept of inclusion has been thoroughly explored in discussions related to special education and disability (Norwich, 2014). The advent of inclusive education was necessitated by the shortcomings associated with utilizing integration as the primary paradigm for special education in the 1960s (Haug, 2017). The process of integration primarily involved extensive modifications at the system level; from a more limited viewpoint, it was restricted to locational integration, which assumed that changing the placement of children—specifically, positioning them within separate special school environments—would sufficiently improve the educational dynamics for the integrated group (D' Alessio et al., 2010; Thomazet, 2009; Vislie, 2003; Winzer, 2009). This methodology impeded the ability of both disabled and non-disabled children to participate in significant dialogic social interactions with one another (Cheng & Beigi, 2011). The integration approach, while ostensibly designed to augment knowledge and develop skills among disabled children through a specialized educational framework, inadvertently perpetuated the division between disabled and non-disabled peers. This outcome highlights a failure to dismantle the deeply rooted biases that persist within the prevailing sociocultural paradigm (Connor & Ferri, 2005; Dixon, 2005; Haug, 2017; Pijl et al., 1997).

The emergence of the concept of inclusion broadens the scope and prompts a profound shift in educational perspectives; it advocates for the reformation of teaching and learning practices to enable the integration of disabled children with their non-disabled peers in traditional classroom settings, rather than consigning them to separate educational facilities (Graham & Jahnuken, 2011). The fundamental aim of inclusive education is to ensure that disabled children are afforded equal opportunities to participate fully in the regular classroom environment alongside their non-disabled counterparts from the local community within educational institutions (Puri & Abraham, 2004). They must be granted access to programs, assessments, and support carefully crafted to address the distinct needs of each individual. Inclusive education emerges as a process of reintegration following a phase of segregation (Jordan & Powell, 1994).

1.3. Conceptual Framework

The concept of disability encompasses a wide range of meanings, each of which has been interpreted in various ways. The various definitions can be discerned within the frameworks of disability models (Forstner, 2022). Since the conclusion of the previous century, the understanding of disability has experienced a profound transformation (Whiteneck, 2006). In our examination, we employ the definition of disability that embodies the understanding of the third generation of disability conceptual frameworks (Forstner, 2022) and is derived from the reform process of the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities, and Handicaps (ICIDH). Within this framework, disability transcends mere health concerns, emerging as a multifaceted and contentious notion, replete with political, medical, ethical, and psychological ramifications (Shakespeare & Watson, 2010; WHO, 2011; Waddington & Priestley, 2021). This definition is fundamentally anchored in the framework of the social model of disability, which posits that disability constitutes a distinct manifestation of social oppression (Olkin, 2002). This model posits that disability is a defining aspect of an individual's unique identity, with the principal factor contributing to disability being the incongruence between the individual and their environment, particularly the absence of accessibility and the abundance of reductionist prejudices (Das et al., 2024). From this vantage point, it is predominantly the socio-cultural, political, and economic environment that engenders disability and obstacles, rather than inherent biological distinctions. This interpretation underscores the necessity for society to establish conducive environmental conditions (both physical and social) for disabled individuals (Shakespeare & Watson, 2010). This model has been selected as the conceptual framework for our research due to the imperative that education fosters opportunities for the younger generation to acquire pertinent knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding disabled individuals. Through this approach, it may be possible to cultivate an environment wherein disabled individuals can attain social acceptance and access opportunities for autonomous living.

1.4. A Brief Overview of Inclusive Education for Disabled Children in India

Since achieving independence on August 15th, 1947, the Indian government has formulated a plethora of policies and initiated various programs aimed at making education accessible to disabled children, ultimately striving for their integration into mainstream school environments alongside their non-disabled counterparts. The Kothari Commission (1964-66) emphasized the inclusion of disabled children, regardless of the nature of their disabilities, within the framework of the general education system. The proposal advocated for emphasizing the imperative of establishing an equitable, unified school system accessible to all. But it also asserted that “many handicapped children feel psychologically broken after being placed in an ordinary school” (Education Commission, 1966, p. 109). This assertion reflects the Commission's predisposition towards the placement of disabled children in specialized educational institutions.

The National Education Policy of 1968, informed by the recommendations of the Kothari Commission, advocated for the enhancement of educational opportunities for disabled children. In 1986, the National Policy on Education prominently highlighted the fundamental issue of equity. Sector 4.9 of this policy specifically addresses the requirements of children with disabilities, incorporating a stipulation for the training of all mainstream education teachers by mandating the inclusion of a compulsory special education component in the pre-service training of general educators (Kohama, 2012). In 1974, the Ministry of Welfare initiated the Integrated Education of Disabled Children (IEDC) to facilitate the integration and retention of students with mild and moderate impairments within conventional educational frameworks. Nevertheless, the emphasis on mild and moderate impairments inherently perpetuated the segregation of children with more severe impairments. The initiative encountered significant obstacles, including insufficient funding, a

shortage of qualified educators, and a lack of support services, all of which severely undermined its overall effectiveness.

In 1992, the Plan of Action (POA) posited that disabled children capable of being educated in a mainstream school ought not to be enrolled in a special school. Children who were initially placed in special schools for the purpose of developing specific curriculum skills should be transitioned to general education settings upon attaining essential daily living skills, effective communication abilities, and foundational academic competencies. The enactment of the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) Act in 1992 served to fortify this POA. The primary aims of this Act were to establish a legal framework for the oversight and standardization of training programs for 16 distinct categories of professionals essential to the realm of special education and the rehabilitation of disabled individuals. The responsibility for training special educators and resource teachers, who are tasked with providing support services to disabled children within mainstream educational settings, was bestowed upon the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI). This era signified a profound transformation in policy, evolving from a simplistic approach to integration towards a more dynamic and deliberate strategy of inclusion. Nevertheless, the requirement for special education training among all educators frequently proved to be cursory, characterized by an absence of substantive engagement and real-world applicability. The RCI Act, although essential for establishing professional standards, resulted in a rigid and overly professionalized framework that often failed to align with the actual conditions present in Indian classrooms and communities.

The Persons with Disabilities Act (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) of 1995 was a pivotal piece of legislation concerning the rehabilitation of disabled individuals. It comprehensively addressed various facets of life for those affected, including education, employment, non-discrimination, health care, and social security. The Act mandated that the government ensure the provision of free and appropriate education for every child with a disability up to the age of 18. This initiative facilitated the inclusion of disabled children within mainstream educational settings, while also providing specialized institutions for those requiring tailored support, thereby ensuring access to vocational training resources. It outlined an extensive framework for allocating facility rights, encompassing transportation, infrastructure, curriculum reform, and examination methodologies.

The initiation of the community school program Janashala in 1998 aligned with the recommendations set forth by the World Bank regarding the implementation of Education for All programs. In districts where the enrollment rate fell short of the anticipated threshold, this program aimed to foster an understanding of the imperative nature of education. The initiative purported to offer complementary education, supplemented by assistive devices and transportation services, aimed at including disabled children within mainstream classroom environments in government-funded educational institutions (Gandhe, 2004; Kalyanpur, 2008). The latest initiative under the EFA framework, known as SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan), was launched circa 2003. It functioned in conjunction with state governments to achieve the universalization of elementary education. This approach synthesized multiple pre-existing frameworks established in prior research and upholds a zero-rejection policy (Limaye, 2016; Sharma, 2018), asserting that no child should be excluded from admission or participation due to their impairments that necessitate special accommodations. The objective was to develop an alternative informal educational framework tailored for the inclusion of disabled children, alongside the initiation of transitional education programs and bridging courses at both residential and non-residential sites. This initiative aimed to integrate disabled children, who had previously been excluded from formal schooling, into the mainstream education system (Rao et al., 2005). The "zero-rejection policy" of the SSA represented a significant ideological transformation, positioning disability as an obstacle for the system to address rather than a burden placed upon the child. Nevertheless, this policy frequently resulted in mere enrolment devoid of substantive inclusion.

The infrastructure, curriculum, and pedagogical methods had persisted in their largely static state, resulting in a situation where numerous disabled children are enrolled in name only, devoid of any substantial educational benefit.

In 2005, the Government of India undertook a significant and thorough policy initiative aimed at the education of disabled individuals, encompassing both children and adults, as articulated in the Minister of Human Resource Development's Policy Statement issued in March of that year. The subsequent phase involved the formulation of a national Action Plan aimed at promoting the inclusion of children with disabilities within the educational framework. This policy purported to generate opportunities for disabled individuals, ostensibly ensuring their inclusion in the Government's educational agenda. However, a disconcerting disparity persisted between the anticipated outcomes and the actual achievements (Baquer & Sharma, 2006). In alignment with this act, the National Curriculum Framework (2005) emphasized disability as a social responsibility and handicap as a social construct, unequivocally asserting that no selection procedures should be implemented to deny admission to disabled learners (p. 84). It underscored the necessity for teacher education to include the objective of equipping educators to meet the varied learning needs of disabled children (p. 108), positing that when a child does not attain success in learning, the responsibility for this failure resides with the educational institution.

The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, enacted in 2006, aimed to create an environment conducive to promoting multiple facets, including physical rehabilitation. This encompassed early identification and intervention strategies, the provision of counseling services, the supply of aids and appliances, as well as the development of rehabilitation professionals. The focus on educational rehabilitation underscored the significance of vocational training as a critical element, while economic rehabilitation emerged as a fundamental necessity for individuals striving to attain a dignified existence (Sharma, 2018). This policy encompassed a wide array of objectives; however, it frequently faced scrutiny due to its hierarchical implementation strategy. The emphasis was placed on formulating broad policy statements aimed at establishing an "enabling environment"; however, it failed to deliver the requisite decentralized resources and local-level autonomy essential for effective implementation.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, commonly known as the RTE Act, received parliamentary approval on August 26, 2009. It was implemented on April 1, 2010. This legislation assigned the government the obligation to guarantee enrolment, attendance, and completion rates. The RTE Act was designed to safeguard the rights of children hailing from marginalized groups (Alam, 2023) and underprivileged sections, thereby ensuring they are not subjected to discrimination and are afforded a comprehensive elementary education. Private, unaided, and designated category schools were mandated to enroll a minimum of 25% of their entry-level cohort from children hailing from weaker and disadvantaged backgrounds. Nevertheless, it encountered scrutiny for failing to explicitly consider the varied and specialized needs of disabled children, thereby creating a discrepancy between the overarching principle of free education and the particular demands necessary for genuine inclusivity in learning. The implementation of a 25% reservation in private schools presented significant challenges in oversight, and numerous institutions lacked the necessary resources to address the diverse needs of these students adequately.

Presently, the Indian National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, has garnered commendation for its commitment to ensuring equitable access to education for all children across India. The National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 emphasizes the importance of ensuring equitable and inclusive educational access for all individuals, with a particular focus on those who are socially and economically marginalized. The newly introduced policy further advocates for the standardization of Indian Sign Language in the educational framework for deaf children. The prevailing inclination in the

education of individuals with hearing impairments favours the utilization of speech therapy and lip-reading methodologies, rather than depending exclusively on sign language. This NEP emphasizes the pressing need for a greater number of specialized educators for disabled children, alongside the provision of resources specifically tailored to meet the diverse needs of these students within educational institutions.

Following the implementation of NEP 2020, the NCF (2023) has recently noted that to ensure equitable physical and curricular access, disabled children with developmental delays necessitate specific accommodations regarding both physical environments and instructional materials. It advocates for educators to engage in a nuanced dialogue, recognizing the diverse learning requirements of each student while delivering an appropriate balance of challenge and support. This approach posits that optimal learning occurs when students are stimulated intellectually, yet not subjected to an environment that induces feelings of threat or overwhelm. If the school finds itself incapable of delivering the requisite assistance or support to a student with an identified impairment, it may seek to engage external resources or specialists. The provisions stipulate that disabled students must be afforded equal access to and opportunities for participation in all art-related activities; however, the extent of their involvement will be contingent upon the degree and severity of their impairments. Individuals would attain a greater sense of agency in their learning processes by engaging in independent work and focusing on their capabilities rather than their limitations. It mandates that educational institutions implement necessary measures to ensure that the physical environment is accessible to disabled learners. For instance, the installation of ramps is imperative for ensuring wheelchair accessibility, and educational institutions that necessitate such provisions may opt to implement lifts. Furthermore, it mandates the establishment of separate restroom facilities for disabled students within traditional educational institutions.

The trajectory of India's policy has evolved from an integrationist framework, exemplified by the Kothari Commission, the IEDC, and the RCI Act, to a more rights-based and inclusion-oriented approach, as seen in the PWD Act, the RTE, NEP 2020, and the NCF 2023. Although numerous policies delineate the social model of disability, the reality in India remains one of inadequate funding, insufficient teacher training, and a prevailing inclination to perceive "inclusion" merely as enrolment rather than genuine participation and access. South Africa adopted a rights-oriented framework at an early stage: the 2001 White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education clearly identifies disability as a systemic impediment to learning and participation, pledging to transform all ordinary schools into "inclusive" environments by eliminating these barriers. In recent developments, the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) (2014) endeavours to actualize the principles of inclusion by methodically establishing protocols for the identification and support of learners facing barriers within mainstream educational environments. Nevertheless, despite robust policy declarations and constitutional assurances regarding the right to fundamental education, implementation remains inconsistent: numerous standard schools are deficient in teacher training, accessible facilities, or district-level specialized support.

Brazil possesses a constitutional guarantee of the right to education for all individuals and has, in recent times, adopted inclusive-education standards integrated into the Law of National Education Guidelines and Bases, as well as a National Education Plan that aligns with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The 2015 Statute of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Brazil further enshrines the imperative to dismantle obstacles and ensure inclusive education. Nonetheless, critics note a dissonance between legal requirements and actual implementation: exclusion persists for students with more profound impairments, in part due to enduring segregative policies and insufficient support systems.

Finland presents a remarkable juxtaposition regarding systemic coherence and its practical application. Instead of prioritizing isolated "special education," Finland implements a multi-tiered

support framework where nearly all children receive instruction in inclusive settings. Additional assistance, ranging from general classroom modifications to more intensive support—though seldom involving separate special education—is offered within or near the regular classroom as required. The pedagogical approach in Finland prioritizes universal design for learning, early intervention, and the adaptation of instruction by educators, as opposed to the conventional model of segregated pull-out special education classrooms.

1.5. Textbooks as a Tool of Sensitization

Nonetheless, substantial evidence indicates that mere placement in mainstream educational environments does not ensure that disabled children will experience acceptance, value, and integration within the classroom (Martinez & Carspecken, 2007; Lindsay & McPherson, 2012). It has been observed by researchers that, despite numerous opportunities throughout the day for nondisabled children to engage with their disabled peers, a significant majority choose to overlook these interactions (Mammas et al., 2020) and exhibit unfavourable attitudes towards them (Grütter et al., 2017). Studies have underscored that this detrimental attitude constitutes a primary obstacle to the inclusion of disabled individuals within societal frameworks (Alnahdi, 2019).

Textbooks serve as a convenient resource for educators seeking to deepen their students' understanding of disability, provided the content aligns with established educational objectives. Textbooks serve as a significant mechanism for fostering disability awareness, acting as a conduit for the dissemination of information and a standardized resource within conventional educational settings. They play a pivotal role in the teaching-learning process, as students dedicate a considerable amount of their time to interacting with the material (Blumberg, 2007; Sinka et al., 2014) and may read upwards of 32,000 pages throughout their academic pursuits (Olson, 1989). Textbooks, as social constructs, embody not merely the official knowledge but also the dominant values, attitudes, and social norms prevalent within a society (Pogorzelska, 2016; Shannon, 2010; Sleeter & Grant, 2003). Consequently, the representation of the world in textbooks plays a crucial role in shaping students' mindsets and their perceptions of identity within the educational community. To cultivate an inclusive educational atmosphere, every student must perceive their identity and surroundings reflected in the literature used for their learning (HSRC, 2005). The integration of verbal and visual depictions of the daily challenges, adversities, and necessities faced by disabled individuals serves to confront the biases held by non-disabled students and educators, promoting the acceptance of disabled children as integral members of society (Blumberg, 2007). The incorporation of disability-related content serves as a proactive strategy aimed at mitigating adverse attitudes, dismantling obstacles to inclusion (Browning & Cagle, 2017), and equipping all students to embrace the ethical imperative of appreciating individual differences (Alves & Lopes dos Santos, 2013). This content, which has emerged as a crucial component of inclusive curricula in the last twenty years, serves a dual purpose: it enables disabled students to identify with characters that reflect their experiences while simultaneously prompting non-disabled students to critically reassess their own preconceived notions and stereotypes (Symeonidou, 2019). Through the integration of disability-related content, textbooks possess the potential to serve as a significant instrument in cultivating an educational atmosphere that fosters respect, diversity, and equality for all (Alves & Lopes dos Santos, 2013).

2. Literature Review

The examination of disability content in school textbooks is intrinsically linked to inclusive education. Research on inclusive education spans nearly fifty years, elucidating the essential conditions for effective implementation of inclusive practices. Inclusive textbooks featuring realistic depictions of disabled individuals are essential in classrooms (Cameron & Rutland, 2006). To meet this criterion, one must analyze disability-related curricula in current textbooks, examine inherent biases (Beckett et al., 2010), and eliminate stereotypical content (Prater & Dyches, 2008). Gender

and racial stereotypes have been extensively analyzed in textbooks, yet research on disability-related content in primary and secondary school materials remains limited (Sleeter & Grant, 2003).

Sleeter and Grant (2003) examined 47 textbooks across various subjects, employing picture and textual analysis to identify disability-related content. Research indicated that disability issues were rarely addressed in textbooks. Storylines overlooked disabled individuals, missing chances to educate the non-disabled about their societal contributions. Analysis of the images indicated a near-total absence of disabled individuals, present in only a handful of pictures. Cheng and Beigi (2011) examined representations of disabled individuals in illustrations across seven Iranian EFL textbooks. Their research indicated a significant underrepresentation of disabled individuals in the analysed textbooks, disadvantaging these students and reinforcing their invisibility. T'aboas-Pais and Rey-Cao (2012) analyzed images of disability in Spanish secondary school physical education textbooks, revealing a narrow portrayal of disabled individuals engaged in segregated, competitive, and elite sports. No references were made to natural environment activities, physical conditioning exercises, games, or artistic expression, despite their inclusion in the physical education curriculum (T'aboas-Pais & Rey-Cao, 2012). Gonzales-Palomares and Rey-Chao (2020) analyzed the disability content in 6,773 images from Spanish secondary physical education textbooks, juxtaposing their findings with earlier research. Their findings align with prior research (T'aboas-Pais & Rey-Cao, 2012; Vidal-Albelda & Martínez-Bello, 2017). Disabled individuals are underrepresented, portrayed in non-inclusive contexts, and predominantly occupy elite positions in textbook imagery. Notable discrepancies emerged when comparing these findings to those of prior research. Elite sports have given way to diverse representations, including artistic motor expression, fitness training, and outdoor physical activities. Outdoor activities increased while indoor activities decreased. Pogorzelska (2016) examined disability-related content in EFL textbooks from Poland and Sweden. The textbooks contributed only partially to the decategorization of disabled individuals, often depicting them separately rather than as integral members of a peer group. Hodkinson et al. (2018) examined the representation of disability in educational texts from Iran and England. Their findings indicated a limited representation of disability in textbooks, mirroring the social marginalization of disabled individuals in both countries. Abu-Hamour et al. (2019) noted the scant representation of disabled individuals in Jordanian school textbooks, despite the presence of numerous topics in the analyzed books (Arabic language, social citizenship, and civics) where disability-related content would have been fitting.

3. Methodology

This paper examines the nature and scope of portrayals of disability and disabled individuals in English textbooks for classes I to VIII, as incorporated within the NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) curriculum.

The NCERT syllabus is chosen as it serves as a reference benchmark, established in 1961 by the Indian government to enhance school education through innovative policies and frameworks. It functions as the primary decision-making entity responsible for developing various educational resources. The choice of Class I to VIII for study stems from an analysis of the divisions in the Indian educational system as outlined by the National Education Policy 2020, including their operational methods and teaching strategies. The National Education Policy 2020 of India outlines an educational framework comprising four stages: foundational (pre-school to Class III), preparatory (Class III to Class V), middle (Class VI to Class VIII), and secondary (Class IX to Class XII). The first three stages prioritize play-based learning, language development, and experiential involvement in science and the arts. This period is formative for shaping social attitudes and behaviors. When textbooks from these early stages lack positive and accurate representations of disability, they perpetuate stereotypes and a deficit-based model. This absence of representation can lead to non-disabled children viewing their disabled peers as "other," reinforcing social alienation and prejudice from an early age.

The choice of English language textbooks is based on two main reasons. English serves as the primary global language of communication (Hellinger, 2001). As a globally significant language, its educational resources consistently integrate diverse literary works, both written and illustrated, from authors worldwide. It broadens the choices for textbook editors, significantly enhancing the representation of the lived experiences of disabled individuals. Literary depictions can critically examine the simplistic stereotypes prevalent in society, exposing readers to diverse realities often marginalized or overlooked (Maginess, 2018).

This paper utilizes proto-text analysis as its methodological framework, concurrently engaging with text, content, and critical discourse analysis. This approach facilitates the deconstruction of both denotative and connotative meanings conveyed and implied by the representations (Johnsen, 1993). The initial stage of this investigation entails a quantitative analysis designed to identify the segments within the textbooks that encompass both verbal and visual depictions of disabled individuals and the concept of disability (Commeys & Alverman, 1996; Ninnes, 2002). This examination encompasses an initial evaluation of the distribution of authorship of contents, characters within the texts, and figures depicted in images within the textbooks, contrasting the disabled and non-disabled populations. This will enable a thorough assessment of the degree to which textbooks allocate space for representing the experiential and emotional realities of disabled individuals. In the subsequent phase, specifically the microanalysis stage, the representations will be subjected to a qualitative assessment that encompasses contextual, rhetorical, and thematic dimensions. This analysis aims to determine whether these portrayals genuinely reflect the complex life experiences of disabled individuals or if they are employed as opportunistic, metaphorical devices or narrative crutches designed to provide cathartic outlets within a distinctly separate narrative context. To understand the perceptions fostered by these textbooks, while also introducing non-disabled students to the experiential and emotional realities encountered by disabled individuals, this qualitative analysis draws on Mitchell and Snyder's (2014) theory of narrative prosthesis.

The theory of narrative prosthesis, developed by David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder, provides a powerful and critical framework for analyzing the portrayal of disability in English textbooks. It posits that, in literature, disability is often used not as an authentic aspect of a character's identity but as a "crutch" or prosthesis to serve a simplistic narrative function. Instead of exploring the genuine complexities of living with an impairment, writers frequently resort to disability as a shortcut for characterization. For instance, a character's disability might be simplistically used to evoke pity, signify a tragic backstory, or, conversely, to represent inspirational courage. This reduces the disabled character to a mere plot device, preventing a nuanced and realistic portrayal. By applying this theory to textbooks, educators can critically analyze whether the disabled characters presented are fully realized individuals or if their disability is merely a narrative tool to advance the story or moral lesson. This approach helps in identifying and challenging deep-seated stereotypes, encouraging a more authentic and respectful representation of disability. Ultimately, using the theory of narrative prosthesis in the classroom can empower students to question and deconstruct simplistic portrayals, fostering a more inclusive and empathetic understanding of disability that extends beyond the confines of the text.

4. Results

4.1. Class 1

Mridang is the textbook of English for class 1. It is constituted of 4 units with 10 chapters, which are hardly assigned to any specific author. Approximately, around 25 non-disabled characters are depicted across the chapters, and around 250 non-disabled human figures are illustrated in this textbook. In contrast, there are hardly 6 images of disabled human figures in the textbook- a) in chapter 1 of unit 1, which acquaints children with names and functions of different body parts, an

image of a disabled child, sitting in a wheelchair, and holding a flower pot (p. 2) (fig. 1), is placed along with another non-disabled child, to exhibit the function of our noses; b) in chapter 2 of unit 1, in the picture given for helping children to talk about their families, a disabled child with a crutch is seen playing with a Pambaram (a throwing top toy) (p. 34) among other non-disabled family members; c) in chapter 2 of unit 2, in the picture where school children are seen to make a circle and sing a rhyme song, a disabled child in a wheelchair is witnessed to participate (p. 63) along with other non-disabled peers; d) in chapter 2 of unit 3, in the beginning two pictures which encourage children to always share food with each other, a disabled child with crutches is portrayed twice and witnessed to share his gobi paratha (fried bread stuffed with cauliflower) (pp. 98-99) with his non-disabled schoolmate; e) in chapter 1 of unit 4, which acquaints children with different seasons and their scenic beauties, a disabled child in a wheelchair is seen playing with non-disabled friends during winter (p. 107).



Figure 1. A disabled child smelling a flower to exhibit the function of our noses.

4.2. Class 2

Mridang is also the title of the English textbook for class 2. It consists of five units, each with 13 chapters. The textbook contains approximately 35 non-disabled characters and 200 images of non-disabled humans. In contrast, "Seeing Without Seeing", chapter 2 of unit 2, "Welcome to my World", is hardly the only section that centers around how a non-disabled mother makes her non-disabled daughter aware of the experiential realities of blind children through role-playing exercises. There is only 1 image of a blind child wearing black glasses (p. 27) (fig. 2) in the textbook, which is present in this chapter.



Figure 2. A non-disabled child wondering how a blind child can study along with her in the same classroom.

4.3. Class 3

Santoor is the textbook of English for class 3. It consists of 4 units, each comprising 3 chapters. Approximately 55 non-disabled characters are depicted, and around 390 figures of non-disabled humans are illustrated across the textbook. In contrast, only in a very short section, in chapter 7, "The Big Laddoo", a blind child, Meena, is seen to surprise her non-disabled friend, Jeethu, by guessing the presence of sweets in a gift box only by touching and smelling (p. 73). There is also 1 picture of this scene given in parallel that illustrates the blind child picking up sweets and surprising her non-disabled friend (fig. 3). Another evidence of representation of disability is present in the cover image of unit 2, "Toys and Games", where a disabled child with crutches is witnessed playing marbles with other non-disabled children.



Figure 3. A blind girl guessing the name of a dessert by touching and smelling.

4.4. Class 4

Santoor is also the title of the English textbook for class 4. It consists of 4 units, each with 3 chapters. For the first time in this textbook, one poem is assigned to an author who is not disabled. The textbook features portrayals of around 35 non-disabled characters and illustrations of approximately 300 non-disabled human figures. In contrast, only chapter 6, "Braille", acquaints children with the famous disabled personality, Louis Braille, who became blind in his childhood and later developed the tactile writing system of Braille in the 19th century from the "night writing" system, hitherto invented by Charles Barbier de la Serre. This chapter includes one exemplary image of what the Braille alphabet looks like (p. 56) (fig. 4) and only three other images of blind human beings (pp. 57-58). Alongside this section, Chapter 5, "The Old Stag", also includes an image of a disabled child in a wheelchair enjoying Jalebis (a special kind of Indian dessert) with other non-disabled children (p. 53) (fig. 5).

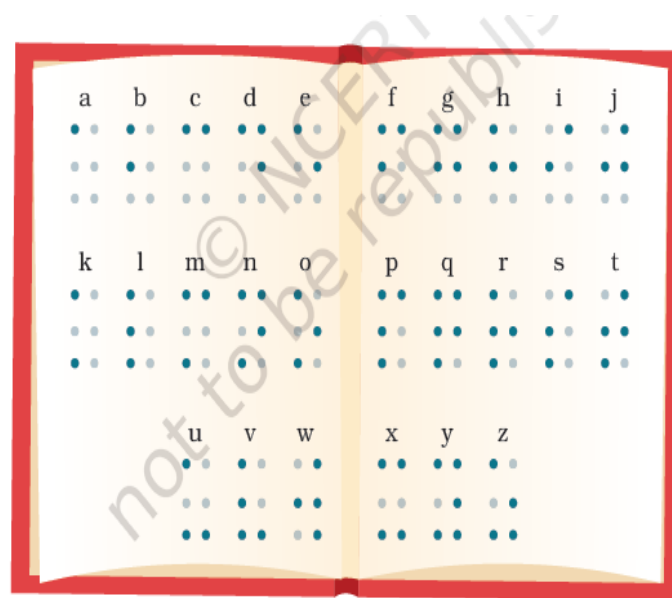


Figure 4. A visual depiction of the Braille alphabet.



Figure 5. A disabled child relishing desserts in the company of his non-disabled friends.

4.5. Class 5

Santoor is also the title of the English textbook for class 5. It contains 5 units with 10 chapters, out of which only 2 poems are assigned to 2 non-disabled authors. Across the textbook, there are approximately 20 non-disabled characters and 200 figures of non-disabled humans. In contrast, there are hardly 3 figures of disabled human beings- a) one in chapter 7, "Gilli Danda", where a disabled child with a crutch is seen holding a page with 3 other non-disabled children for exercise on increasing vocabulary of words with double letters (p. 86) (fig. 6), and b) the other two in the chapter 8, "The Decision of the Panchayat", where a disabled man with crutches is seen twice (pp. 93-94), to be participating in a village Panchayat meeting, conducted to resolve a dispute of ownership of a well between two villagers.



Figure 6. A disabled child joyfully engaging in a task with his non-disabled counterparts.

4.6. Class 6

Poorvi is the textbook of English for class 6. It comprises 5 units, each with 16 chapters, written by 7 non-disabled authors. It has approximately 30 non-disabled characters and 135 figures of non-disabled human beings. In contrast, there is only one chapter, "Ila Sachani: Embroidering Dreams with her Feet", under the unit "Culture and Tradition", which, at the very outset, acquaints children with the famous disabled personality, Pranav M. Balasubramaniam, from Palakkad in Kerala, who was born without both hands, but excelled as an artist, a singer, and a para-sportsperson and then focuses on narrating the biography of Ila Sachani, who was born with her hands hanging loose by her sides, in a farmer's family in Gujarat, and pursued her dream of doing embroidery with her feet. This chapter contains one sketch of how Pranav M. Balasubramaniam paints with his feet (p. 151), one portrait of Ila Sachani (p. 152), and one demonstrating photograph of how she does her art with her feet (p. 152) (fig. 7). Alongside this chapter, the chapter "Rama to the Rescue" also has an illustration, where a disabled child in wheelchair, is seen holding the scorecard of a football match between his non-disabled friends (p. 29).



Figure7. A visual demonstration of how Ila Sachani accomplishes artistic endeavors with her feet.

4.7. Class 7

Poorvi is also the title of the English textbook for class 7. It is composed of 5 units with 15 chapters, distributed among approximately 11 non-disabled authors and 1 disabled author. Approximately, there are around 35 non-disabled characters and 230 illustrations of non-disabled human figures in the textbook. In contrast, hardly the sole representation of disability is in the unit "Learning Together", which includes an essay, "Three Days to See", written by the deaf and blind author, Helen Keller. In this essay, she envisions a remarkable three-day journey of sight, meticulously planning to immerse herself in distinct facets of existence: Day 1 would be devoted to the observation

and appreciation of humanity and the intricacies of human expressions; Day 2 would entail a profound exploration of knowledge through the lens of art and history within the hallowed halls of museums and libraries; and Day 3 would centre on the exquisite beauty of nature and the rhythmic patterns of urban life. The essay stands as a profound reminder to cherish one's sensory experiences and engage fully with life, acknowledging the extraordinary within the commonplace. This essay includes an illustration of Helen touching and feeling the beauty of an exquisite flower (p. 29) (fig. 8).



Figure 8. Helen touching and feeling the beauty of an exquisite flower.

4.8. Class 8

Poorvi is also the title of the English textbook for class 8. It comprises 5 units with 15 chapters, written by approximately 10 non-disabled authors and 1 disabled author. The textbook contains around 45 non-disabled characters and 290 illustrations of non-disabled human figures. In contrast, there are hardly 2 images of disability- a) one in the practice section in the chapter, "A Tale of Valour: Major Somnath Sharma and the Battle of Badgam", where a disabled child in a wheelchair is seen discussing lessons with her non-disabled mates in the classroom (p. 66) (fig. 9) and b) another in the practice section of the chapter, "The Magic Brush of Dreams", where a disabled child with a walking stick and black glasses, is seen interacting amicably with his non-disabled peers (p. 136).



Figure 9: A child in a wheelchair discussing lessons with her non-disabled mates in the classroom.

5. Discussion

5.1. Advantages of Representations

After locating the aforementioned verbal and visual representations of disability across eight textbooks, they are classified into four categories. Primarily, there is a category of visual

representations in which disabled human beings are merely present in the crowd with their non-disabled counterparts. Secondly, there is another category of visual representations, in which disabled human beings are not merely present rather engaging in friendly conversations and playful interactions with their non-disabled counterparts. Thirdly, there is a category of text-based representations that deals with role-playing exercises, which can acquaint non-disabled children with the experiential realities of disabled people. Lastly, there is another category of text-based representations that delve deep into the biographical and autobiographical narratives of disabled personalities who have overcome their own impairments, as well as societal prejudices, and pursued their dreams. The classificatory schema of disability representations across the eight textbooks delineates a pedagogical spectrum that engages both visual and textual modalities of representation, thereby executing significant ideological functions within the school curriculum. Each category, when examined through the framework of disability studies, unveils unique opportunities for deconstructing ableist dominance and cultivating inclusive visions.

Depictions of disabled individuals integrated within the assembly of their non-disabled peers, while appearing benign, play a significant role in what experts in disability studies refer to as normalization (Simpson, 2018; Winance, 2007; Zaks, 2024) through visibility (Silva & Tasso, 2012). Through the integration of disabled individuals within communal social contexts, devoid of excessive focus, such representations undermine the cultural framing of disability as a spectacle of aberration (Foss et al., 2016). It plays a pivotal role in deconstructing the able gaze (Dawn, 2014; Gannicott, 2018), which tends to pathologize difference, while simultaneously advocating for a social-relational model that recognizes disability as an integral aspect of the human experience. This approach possesses the merit of discreetly addressing the epistemic violence (Graves & Spencer, 2022) inherent in erasure; however, it is imperative to exercise vigilance against tokenism and the potential pitfall of superficial representational inclusion devoid of meaningful interaction.

Visual depictions of engaging interactions between disabled children and their non-disabled peers embody a challenge to the hegemony of normalcy (Davis, 2002) by visually representing disability as inherently aligned with joy, social interaction, and camaraderie. The emotional resonance of play and camaraderie transcends deficit-focused paradigms, embedding disabled childhoods within a more expansive dialogue of togetherness and mutual understanding. The educational benefit in this context is rooted in nurturing emotional connections between disabled and non-disabled children (Fu et al., 2022; Ling et al., 2025), promoting attitudes of empathy and acknowledgment rather than condescension. These images allude to the social model of disability, emphasizing relational dynamics rather than physical differences.

Textual representations of role-playing exercises that emulate the lived experiences associated with disability resonate with the concepts articulated by disability theorists, particularly the notion of *crip pedagogy* (Mitchell & Snyder, 2014), which challenges conventional assumptions by engaging students in embodied thought experiments. Such exercises can illuminate the material-semiotic entanglements (Harley, 2022) of disability, enabling non-disabled students to comprehend structural barriers instead of merely reducing disability to individualized impairment. The benefit in this context is rooted in fostering a critical awareness of disabling environments, thus actualizing Paulo Freire's (2005) educational praxis aimed at liberation. Nevertheless, one must acknowledge the potential for "temporary simulation" to inadvertently bolster voyeuristic empathy, necessitating a meticulous framework for these exercises that incorporates critical reflection.

Narratives, both biographical and autobiographical, of disabled individuals triumphing over adversity and societal bias serve as compelling counter-narratives to prevailing cultural scripts that often depict tragedy, dependence, or passivity. They implement the concept articulated by Rosemarie Garland-Thomson (2017), demonstrating how disabled individuals ingeniously navigate spaces that are not designed with their needs in mind. Furthermore, these texts have the potential

to cultivate criptistemologies (Johnson & McRuer, 2024)—distinct forms of knowledge that contest ableist epistemic hierarchies. The educational benefit resides in presenting non-disabled learners with models of resilience and agency, while concurrently granting disabled students validating roles within the learning environment.

5.2. Limitations of Representations

Though these representations have attempted to eradicate the attitudinal barriers that obstruct the principles of inclusive education, they are confined within extremely constricted contours. The analysis of English textbooks from Class I to Class VIII reveals four limitations in their representations, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Primarily, in total, while there are approximately 280 non-disabled characters and 2,000 non-disabled figures, including all textbooks, there are only around six disabled characters and 20 illustrations of disabled figures. Similarly, among the mentioned authors, approximately 30 are non-disabled, while only 2 are disabled. This reflects that disability issues and disabled people have not had enough space for representation in the textbooks, and it is not yet sufficient to have a profound impact on the mindset of the general populace in regular schools.

Furthermore, the portrayals are confined exclusively to those of characters who experience blindness or deafness, or who encounter difficulties in ambulation, or who struggle with the mobility of their hands. When the subject of disability arises, the collective consciousness of society often conjures images of individuals utilizing crutches or wheelchairs, those adorned with dark glasses and employing a cane for navigation, or persons who rely on hearing aids and face communication barriers (Hirschmann & Linker, 2014; Ysasi et al., 2018). While English textbooks have made an effort to include either visual representations or reading segments addressing disability and disabled individuals, the portrayals remain limited. They predominantly focus on a narrow spectrum of disabilities, such as blindness, deafness, and mobility impairments, neglecting a broader range that encompasses learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, and cerebral palsy. This illustrates the pervasive cultural reticence surrounding the discourse on disability issues, coupled with a fundamental lack of awareness regarding the diverse spectrum of impairments and the intricate experiential, emotional, and existential realities faced by disabled individuals.

Thirdly, the verbo-visual representations, in an effort to simplify, have predominantly depended on clichéd, overtly visible signifiers of impairments such as wheelchairs, dark glasses, and crutches, while failing to employ innovative strategies that could effectively convey hidden disabilities. Concealed disabilities include all impairments or handicaps that are not readily observable, quantifiable, or easily defined. They are entities devoid of external characteristics or discernible indicators. (Fitzgerald & Paterson, 1995). Furthermore, a multitude of disabilities persist in obscurity, as they fall outside the parameters of current diagnostic evaluations that are acknowledged and validated. As a result, the illness and the experiences associated with it are not merely examined (for example, TMJ, CFS, back pain); the very validity of the condition itself is also brought into doubt. For instance, there is an absence of universally acknowledged evaluations to demonstrate the particular tissue damage that certain individuals associate with TMJ and various chronic pain conditions. The evaluations concerning hypoglycaemia and chronic fatigue syndrome are topics of significant contention, whereas multiple sclerosis is often identified solely when the MRI is performed at a propitious time. Essentially, a multitude of conditions persist in being shrouded from comprehensive diagnostic scrutiny (Fitzerald, 2001). Numerous individuals experience conditions, illnesses, and structural and biomechanical anomalies that impose limitations on life, yet these are not immediately apparent to others. The lack of overtly discernible indicators often leads to a profound identity crisis, as individuals are compelled to continuously provide evidence of their conditions to gain access to

the available assistance. The textbooks markedly neglect to familiarize children with the rich tapestry of lived experiences of individuals who endure hidden disabilities.

Fourthly, the pedagogical framework of sensitization in these textbooks is remarkably uniform, predominantly confined to basic role-playing activities. These simplistic simulations illustrate what Mitchell and Snyder (2014) refer to as narrative prosthesis—utilizing disability as a pedagogical tool rather than acknowledging it as a multifaceted, lived experience. The educational emphasis on rudimentary mimetic activities—like simulating blindness with blindfolds or deafness through silence—continues to be linked to what Fiona Kumari Campbell (2012) identifies as ableist epistemologies. These frameworks prioritize normative curiosity (Garland-Thomson, 2017), thereby obstructing authentic epistemic engagement with disabled experiences. Although these strategies introduce non-disabled children to fundamental sensory and mobility adaptations such as white canes, tactile cues, and walking aids, they concurrently diminish the rich diversity inherent in crip technoscience (Fritsch et al., 2019)—the myriads of innovative coping mechanisms and access practices that disabled individuals develop within both public and private domains. The lack of such multiplicity results in a diminished pedagogy of disability, confining disabled experience to notions of deficit and dependence, instead of recognizing it as a valuable source of knowledge creation and innovative world-building.

Furthermore, the absence of integrating children into participatory, contextually relevant, activity-oriented experiences signifies a more profound curricular commitment to what Garland-Thomson (2006) critiques as the visual politics of disability: the inclination to fetishize visible impairments while obscuring the relational, environmental, and structural aspects of disablement. By failing to involve school communities in learning disabled modes of navigation, communication, and adaptation, these textbooks reinforce the dichotomy of disabled versus non-disabled instead of fostering what Alison Kafer (2003) describes as a political/relational model of disability. In this context, the dependence of textbooks on rote simulations functions not as authentic sensitization but rather as a mere symbolic reproduction of able-bodied supremacy masquerading as inclusion.

6. Conclusion

Given that school textbooks function as cultural artifacts (Gray, 2000) and ideological state apparatuses (Althusser, 2014), they significantly influence the epistemic frameworks through which children perceive the social world. Consequently, their assembly transcends mere mechanical transmission of information and should be perceived as a sophisticated form of discursive construction that influences children's understanding of difference, identity, and relational dynamics. Analyzing the realm of disability studies reveals a striking deficiency in quantitative data and a lack of depth in qualitative representations of disability. This situation highlights an enduring cultural ableism, where the experiences of disabled individuals are either superficially acknowledged or relegated to the periphery of narrative discourse.

To address this representational shortcoming, textbooks must allocate substantial narrative and visual attention to the subject of disability. This should not be achieved through mere incidental imagery or tedious text, but rather through the inclusion of dedicated chapters that emphasize the rich experiential, emotional, and existential dimensions of the lives of disabled individuals. Such inclusions must avoid the overdetermined symbols of the white cane, the wheelchair, or dark glasses, which signify the dominance of the norm, and instead broaden to encompass representations of hidden disabilities, neurodivergence, and psychosocial variations. This would challenge the ocularcentrism prevalent in contemporary curricular practices, which favor visible impairments while obscuring forms of suffering and adaptation that exist beyond both the visual scrutiny and the diagnostic frameworks of biomedicine. The representational politics surrounding pedagogical authority are equally significant. The persistent depiction of disabled children as mere recipients of

guidance from non-disabled educators perpetuates internalized ableism (Campbell, 2008), reinforcing hierarchies of knowledge creation that undermine the legitimacy of disabled epistemologies. The lack of disabled educators in these curricular frameworks diminishes the potential for aspirational identifications among disabled students. It perpetuates the fallacy regarding their inability to assume intellectual leadership roles.

In contrast, illustrating classroom environments where disabled educators teach primarily non-disabled learners would serve as a manifestation of the political/relational model of disability (Kafer, 2003), challenging established dichotomies of competence and dependency. Ultimately, the discourse surrounding inclusive education may deteriorate into a mere neoliberal cliché unless educational materials genuinely enrich the curriculum by reflecting the diverse perspectives and knowledge systems of the disabled community. This transformation would not simply enhance current material but would serve as a counter-hegemonic act, challenging cultural biases and deconstructing the symbolic frameworks of ableism that persist in shaping educational environments. In this context, textbooks serve not merely as reflections of societal realities but also as possible arenas of resistance—possessing the ability to initiate what Garland-Thomson (2011) refers to as a politics of misfitting, in which disabled embodiments reveal, challenge, and reconfigure the boundaries of conventional education.

7. Suggestion

Incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006) as a foundational framework, textbooks must adhere to a rights-based approach to disability. This approach acknowledges disabled students not merely as recipients of charity but as active subjects of rights and contributors to the creation of knowledge. This approach would effectively challenge the deeply rooted medicalized narratives and instead endorse the social-relational model of disability, which prioritizes structural and attitudinal obstacles above individual impairments. Textbooks are essential for operationalizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4: Quality Education) and should play a pivotal role in fostering inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education. Representational practices should encompass intersectionality (Alam, 2025; Cho et al., 2013), acknowledging the diverse spectrum of disabled identities—encompassing gender, class, caste, and rural/urban distinctions—thereby challenging the singular narrative of disability. Textbooks should transcend superficial representations and embrace a multiplicity of narratives.

Visual representations ought to challenge ocularcentric ableism by encompassing not only visible disabilities but also invisible or concealed impairments, including neurodivergence, learning disabilities, and psychosocial challenges. The textual content should illuminate criptistemologies—the distinctive modes of knowing, creating, and narrating that emerge from disabled experiences—across biographical, fictional, and autobiographical genres. Disability should be integrated into various thematic domains such as family, friendship, education, work, and play, rather than being treated as isolated or exceptionalized references. This curricular approach aligns with the Universal Design for Learning (UDL), promoting the normalization of disabled individuals rather than their segregation. Instead of relying exclusively on simplistic role-playing, educational materials should emulate nuanced classroom situations that highlight the infrastructural, pedagogical, and technological challenges present. Utilizing Freirean critical pedagogy, these exercises have the potential to foster a critical awareness of disability among non-disabled students, transforming empathy from mere pity into a profound sense of solidarity. Representations must encompass disabled educators, authors, and thinkers, thus challenging the pervasive epistemic ableism that relegates disabled individuals to mere recipients of knowledge. Such representations would resonate with the principle of Nothing About Us Without Us, a foundational tenet of the global disability rights

movement. To challenge the supercrip narrative, which glorifies disabled persons solely upon their ability to surpass their impairments, educational materials should prioritize the importance of collective access strategies, infrastructural modifications, and the advancements in crip technoscience. This promotes a systemic rather than an individualistic comprehension of disability.

Within the Indian framework, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016) and the National Education Policy (2020) establish directives for inclusive education that must be mirrored in textbooks. On a global scale, frameworks such as UNESCO's Education for All and the Inclusive Education Guidelines (2009) emphasize the importance of a curriculum design that is sensitive to diversity. The incorporation of these policies into textbook content guarantees both legal and pedagogical consistency. Textbooks ought to integrate disability arts, literature, and performance to foster what Garland-Thomson (2005) refers to as aesthetic access. By highlighting the creative and cultural contributions of disabled individuals, textbooks can challenge the simplistic dichotomy of ability versus impairment and promote a more nuanced form of inclusion. In accordance with Bakhtin's (1986) concept of dialogism, narratives within textbooks should embody a polyphonic structure rather than a singular voice, thereby enhancing the representation of varied perspectives from disabled individuals. Incorporating first-person narratives and testimonies would disrupt the conventional perspective and foster emotional connections between disabled and non-disabled learners.

Declarations

Author Contributions. Sayan Das: Writing- original draft, Resources, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Conceptualization. Dr. Md Moshabbir Alam (Corresponding Author): Writing – review & editing, Methodology, Formal analysis, Validation, Supervision. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest. The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Funding. The authors declare that no funds, grants, or other support were received during the preparation of this manuscript.

Ethical Approval. The research adheres to ethical standards appropriate to this research. While there are no direct human participants in this study, ethical considerations include respectful engagement with the NCERT text and ensuring that any critiques are grounded in scholarly rigor.

Data Availability Statement. This work is not empirical research. It is based on content analysis of the NCERT book, which is available in the public domain. Therefore, informed consent did not apply to this research. The data supporting the findings of this study are primarily derived from publicly available sources.

Acknowledgments.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Dr. Sandip Sarkar (Associate Professor, NIT Raipur) and Dr. Waseem Ahmad (Dean, Arts & Social Sciences, Glocal University, Saharanpur) for their invaluable encouragement and support, which greatly motivated us to undertake and complete this study.

Disclaimer.

All the books analyzed in this research paper have been sourced from the official NCERT website. The content remains the intellectual property of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). No modifications have been made to the original texts. For reference and access to the official textbooks, please visit: <https://ncert.nic.in/textbook.php>

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