CHAPTER – 5

MAJOR FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive summary of the major findings from the data analysis, followed by a detailed discussion of the implications for teacher education, policy formulation, and inclusive classroom practices. Drawing from both the quantitative trends and qualitative insights of the study, this chapter aims to highlight what has been learned and how it can inform future practice and reform.

5.2 Major Findings

The study explored the perceptions of 40 final-year B.Ed students from two teacher education colleges (one government and one private) in Chapra, Bihar. Key findings include:

1. High Awareness but Moderate Understanding of Inclusive Education

- **87.5%** of respondents acknowledged that they had studied inclusive education in their B.Ed program.

- However, open-ended responses revealed confusion between inclusive education and special education.

- Many students equated "inclusive" with only disability, ignoring aspects like gender, caste, language, and economic disadvantage.

2. Low Practical Exposure

- **65%** of students had **no real-life interaction with children with disabilities** during their internship.

- FGDs and interviews indicated that even when CwDs were enrolled, B.Ed trainees were rarely allowed to engage with them meaningfully.

3. Positive Attitudes, Limited Confidence

- While **80%** believed CwDs could be taught in regular classrooms, only **40%** felt confident doing so.

- Female students were slightly more confident in handling inclusive classrooms, citing "patience" and "emotional connection" as strengths.

4. Perceived Barriers to Inclusion

Top challenges cited included:

- Lack of training (mentioned by 28 students)

- Inadequate infrastructure (24)

- Peer insensitivity (16)

- Curriculum rigidity (13)

5. Support Needed for Implementation

The most mentioned supports were:

- Access to special educators (30)

- Hands-on training workshops (28)

- Inclusive teaching materials (25)

6. Empathy and Inclusion

- **80%** of students believed that inclusive classrooms help build empathy among peers.

- FGDs confirmed this, with students expressing a desire for "friendlier, more caring classrooms."

7. Systemic Disconnect

DIET officials and college lecturers admitted that while inclusive education is promoted in policies (e.g., NCF 2005, NEP 2020), actual **curriculum implementation is weak and inconsistent** across institutions.

5.3 Discussion of Findings

a. Inclusive Education as a Value and a Skill

The findings reveal that inclusive education is well-accepted **as an ideal**, but poorly supported **as a practice**. This distinction is critical. Inclusion is not just about ideology; it's a set of skills — identifying diverse learning needs, modifying content, ensuring participation — that must be taught and practiced.

b. Need for Practicum-Based Teacher Training

The lack of hands-on exposure with CwDs during internship is worrying. **Observation without interaction** does not develop competence. Teacher education programs must include:

- **Mandatory inclusive practicum**

- **Mentorship by special educators**

- **Simulation-based exercises** during B.Ed training

c. Gender Dimension in Confidence

Interestingly, the data suggest that female B.Ed students were **more confident and empathetic** toward inclusion. This opens scope for future gender-based research on how emotional labor, patience, and nurturing are distributed or perceived in teaching roles.

d. Infrastructure and Pedagogical Gaps

Even enthusiastic B.Ed students feel helpless in classrooms without ramps, resource rooms, or inclusive textbooks. **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** is still missing from most teacher education syllabi.

e. Policy-Practice Mismatch

Policies like **NEP 2020** emphasize inclusive education, but without proper budgeting, teacher training reforms, and monitoring, such policies remain aspirational.

5.4 Educational Implications

The study's findings have the following implications for various stakeholders:

a. For Teacher Education Institutions

- Incorporate **practical modules** on inclusive pedagogy in every semester.

- Ensure **internships include meaningful exposure** to diverse learners.

- Introduce **bridge courses or online certification** for inclusive teaching.

b. For Curriculum Developers

- Shift from "disability-only" models to broader **diversity and inclusion frameworks**.

- Include content on **social inclusion, classroom strategies, and case-based learning**.

- Promote regional language material on inclusive education for better comprehension.

c. For Educational Administrators

- DIETs and SCERTs should organize **workshops, exposure visits, and mentorships**.

- Provide funding for **inclusive TLMs** (teaching-learning materials) and **assistive devices**.

d. For Policy Makers

- Ensure that NEP 2020 recommendations for inclusive education are **backed by funding and monitoring**.

- Include **performance indicators** for colleges based on how well they train students in inclusion.

e. For Future Researchers

- Conduct longitudinal studies to see how today's B.Ed students implement inclusion tomorrow.

- Explore **caste-based, gender-based, and linguistic inclusion** in classrooms — not just disability-related inclusion.

5.5 Suggestions from Respondents

Based on questionnaire responses and FGDs, students themselves suggested:

- Weekly interactive sessions with special educators

- Video case studies of inclusive classrooms

- A dedicated "Inclusion Day" during internship

- Peer mentoring groups among B.Ed students to support inclusive pedagogy learning

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter brought together the findings of the research and connected them to the larger educational discourse. The study clearly shows that while inclusive education is widely supported in principle, its effective implementation remains a challenge due to systemic gaps in training, exposure, and resources. There is great potential in the positive attitudes of pre-service teachers, and it is the responsibility of teacher education institutions, policy makers, and educational administrators to harness this potential through appropriate interventions.