

Are We All Alike?

Questioning the Pathologies of the 'Normate'

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ABSTRACT

There is something wrong with homogeneity; the *fact* that difference is the norm is socio-politically suppressed by brandishing the weapon of homogeneity. We are made to think that we are all alike. I start this paper by questioning our incessant celebration of homogeneity and show further that normativity is the unifying and underlying force working for homogeneity. This overwhelming presence of the normative demands an examination of the system of knowledge, since, in spite of its oppressive presence, normativity is rarely questioned, more so, in the sphere of education. I will take up the case of education for marginalised groups in order to demonstrate the above. In the field of education, whether it is through the curriculum, the delivery, or the material, normativity conspires to construe a bias in the mind of the learner. Within a strategy based on reforms, the question of whether or not to address such an issue as a 'special' case arises, in turn, compelling us to reopen the discussion on the much-abused issue of inclusion. I will suggest three ways of achieving inclusion: through empathy, as a right, and through a Dalit/disability-centric knowledge system. I will show that both the empathy and the right perspectives fail, primarily because the first leads to compassion and charity and the second to merely structural changes due to its lack of connection with development and life-value criteria. I will elaborate a third way, based on the philosophy of Integrative Difference—*Integrative-Difference Based Inclusive Education*—which requires us to shift our ontologies from the disability/Dalit model to that of the 'normate', to shift our gaze to the production, operation and maintenance of normateism and to study the 'pathologies of the normate'.

Published in *Education and Inequality: Historical and Contemporary Trajectories*, eds. Vikas Gupta, Rama Kant Agnihotri, Minati Panda. Published by Orient BlackSwan Pvt Ltd, 2021.

INTRODUCTION

I begin with a simple question in the context of our world of academic practices, about the nature of the normative, namely, *how should a paper look like?* The answer appears as a simple figure depicting the ‘plan’ of the present paper as follows:¹

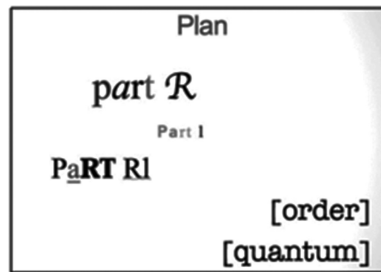


FIGURE 17.1 A Pictorial Representation of the Central Idea

The representation in Figure 17.1 gives the impression that something has gone wrong, but this is intentional. The contents could have been Parts 1, 2, 3 or A, B, C instead of R, L, RL, which is, first of all, not sequential. All we can gather from this part of the representation is that the paper has three parts. Note that this is the best deconstruction of the three things that is possible, but the three-ness itself cannot be subverted; order can be altered in many ways—through fonts, capitalisation scheme, etc. There are very few generalisations that one can arrive at from this representation except the fact that the whole consists of parts due to the unavoidable semantics of the word ‘part’. The figure thus correctly refers to order and quantity as the two factors that are subverted here. This whole exercise is meant to prod us to question received normativity—here, for an academic exercise of writing a paper or presenting a talk.

Crucially though, the figure makes another important point. The fact that the slide, in spite of the deconstruction of various norms, makes sense and provides the reader with some idea of the structure and the content (for example, if the letters ‘R’ and ‘L’ were spelt out as ‘Rant’ and ‘Location’, respectively—see Part 1 and Part 2). The central idea I later propose in the domain of education looks at inclusion and difference exactly from this point of view of integrating difference (here,

represented graphemically). Thus, the figure serves the dual purpose of questioning the normative and suggesting a philosophy of integrating difference.

PART I: THE RANT, OR AN ACTIVIST'S REFRAIN²

I begin the paper by constructing a fable that in a way captures in spirit the main theoretical content of my proposal later; unfortunately, it remains a fable.

Inclusion in practice is merely 'adding voices but not changing what has already been said' (Spelman, 1997, pp. 162–3, in Ferri, 2006, p. 292). Critical theory advocates that only foundational changes or a radical overhaul can bring a paradigm shift—we need to get out of our collective slumber of the status quo, which includes, among other things, special schools since we know that special education historically morphed into special schools, a change from a cognitive category to a physical space, and therefore the reality of 'confinement'. But revolutions—as we knew them—don't happen anymore, so isn't that a dead end?

In Bhattacharya (2010, p. 25), I talked about a three-pronged strategy, one of which was: Even if it is idealistic, push for inclusion in education. Although that paper highlighted the problem of mainstreaming Deaf students, the idea of inclusion cannot be given up.

If *even* the idea dies, there will be no revolution, however small.

I say that one way to tackle inclusion is to break it down into smaller goals. One of the strategies that I will explore here is the strategy of questioning categories. For example, as a teacher I could ask myself: What is knowledge? How is knowledge constructed? What are the *dispositifs*³ that conspire to construct knowledge relations exerted by disciplinary regimes? In short, what is the genealogy of knowledge?

One day we could sit down and contemplate and not teach a prescribed lesson on Gandhi but on Gouri Hari Das.⁴

This is how a revolution begins, however small.

Similarly, I could ask: Who is a student? That is, what is my definition of a student? Is the blind student a 'blind student', a category separate from *my* students? That is how a category that is so obvious in an academic's life lends itself to re-examination.

This is how a revolution begins, however small.

One could also look at the textbooks and ask: Who is it made for? Have we ever thought that books have human connections? Books are seen as instruments, not something organic, not something that can be an extension of the human, a part of us. All of us have a favourite book, but none of us have a favourite textbook; why? A school textbook is designed to keep the child away so that you cannot extend your 'self' into the book; it is meant to not become you. We could ask why the book is at the centre of the material world of teaching-learning. Or a certain form of a book. We could replace it by a song, a film, a game, even if only for a day.

This is how a revolution begins, however small.

We could consider the function of examinations. Before a child learns the word 'ghost', the child learns the word EXAM (in India). The semantic network of that word contains FEAR, ANXIETY, LOSS, FAILURE, and of course, more and more, SUICIDE. The word 'exam' is meant to forever change your psychology and permanently take away something from your wellness of being; something that is never repaired, never made up. Does it function as a marker of evaluation or to forever mark us out, stigmatise?

One day, we could decide to do away with exams, at least of the usual kind.

This is how a revolution begins, however small.

One day we could also look around the classroom and ask if it encourages different ways of moving through space as valid; are the posters, the charts, the signs, democratic ways of informing/ advocating/ counselling/ warning? One day we could take a class on the ground floor or read out/ sign the messages in the chart/ posters.

This is how a revolution begins, however small.

We can begin thus by questioning the prominent paraphernalia associated with educational structures.

PART 2: THE SCHOLASTIC LOCATION

The idea that ails modernity is the over-presence of homogeneity while all the 'artefacts' are proclaimed as heterogeneous. For example, more and more, people all over the world are encouraged and/or forced to

have similar/ identical options, whereas in a multilingual/ multicultural country like India, diversity is (I claim, falsely) ‘celebrated’. One could imagine any multiple assortments, call it multidimensionality, as merely a collection of multiple things, be it languages or cultures. Thus, a society with pockets of speakers of different languages or cultures can be considered multilingual or multicultural, respectively. I call this collective existence of multiple types of things *multidimensionality by habitation* (Bhattacharya, 2014d). Multidimensionality in most systems is multidimensionality only by habitation. This, I think is the greatest ailment of the present situation: multiplicity of customs, languages, cultures, religions etc. is just a ‘habit’, and in its wake, most surprisingly, it brings about an overwhelming sense of homogeneity, that is, in spite of the overwhelming presence of such an array of multiplicity at various levels and spheres, both individuals and collectives (for example, communities) are provided with fewer options. The engine that runs this multidimensional vehicle is the engine of normativity. I devote most of Part 2 to understand the true nature of the normative, especially through the etymology of the word ‘norm’.

2.1 Before Etymology

Goffman (1963) analysed stigmatisation as a social process that marks out all forms of otherness, a devaluation process that is collective and part of communal acculturation (Garland-Thomson, 1997, p. 31). Stigmatisation forms the basis of Garland-Thomson’s (ibid.) famous coinage *normate*—a socially determined concept of a normal individual. This is a figure that Garland-Thomson considers mutually constituting. It is ‘the veiled subject position of cultural self, the figure outlined by the array of deviant others’ (ibid, p. 8).

However, what is crucial in the emergence of the *normate* subject, I show, is the obliteration that the deviant *other* impacts; ‘veiled’ (used in Garland-Thomson’s coinage) in this connection, I think, is misleading, since it imagines a concealment, whereas I claim that the visibility of the deviant figure makes the *normate* invisible. As I show below, this is an image that is missing from the family of analyses along this line.

Garland-Thomson considers that ‘deviant, marked bodies shore up the *normate*’s boundaries’ (ibid., p. 8). This way, the outline of the *normate* is constituted by the deviant. Campbell (2009, pp. 11–13)

captures this in a more nuanced fashion by designating the other a place—‘a place in liminality to secure the performative enactment of the normal’; in her analysis, abject life forms the ‘constitutive outside of the thinkable’ (ibid, pp. 11–12). Although both analyses thus point towards constituting the outline of the *normate*, in Campbell, the outcome of the process is ambivalent since the abled norm is also considered to be ‘vacuous and elusive’. In fact, very tellingly, Campbell introduces the metaphor of mirroring, where the other is positioned as a mirror, which signifies a(n) absence/ loss of face and falls within the zone of the ‘unthought’. Contrary to the clamour for its absence, the continuous presence of disability is most effectively realised through normative discourse.

However, I argue that this abashment or loss of face of the deviant other causes the *normate* to disappear, whose only signifier is its mirrored outside. As I show in the rest of this section, the *normate* is never defined in its own terms and therefore remains invisible, while the discordant that apparently shores up its boundaries is always visible. Thus, in my analysis the so-called ‘outline’ is Campbell’s positioned mirror, and additionally, therefore, the deviant other is perplexed, embarrassed, and remains agape, a word derived from Norman French *bair* ‘to gape or yawn’, the same root that derives *abash*. In terms of the notion of inclusion, I will argue that the *normate* is the invisible centre.

2.2 Etymology

In this section, I will play with two possible etymologies of the term *normate*; and by doing so, I hope to discover new grounds for its understanding and functionality within the broader concept of the normative.

The two possible reconstructions of the etymology of the Garland-Thomson coinage, *normate*, are given below:

1. *Normāte*⁵ is first person plural present active imperative of the verb *normō* ‘to square, to set by the square’ from the Latin noun *nōrma* ‘carpenter’s square, a measure, a standard’, which in turn is derived from the Ancient Greek γνῶμων [*gnō:mɔ:n*] ‘Judge’ or γνῶριμα [*gnōrima*]; the Greek proto-form of these latter derivations is **gno-* (cf. Latin: *gnarus* ‘skilful, practised,

expert') or **gna-* in Sanskrit which is related to the Sanskrit *ganami* 'know'. Before we proceed to analyse the import of this reconstruction, let us look at the Figure 17.2 of a carpenter's square:



FIGURE 17.2 Carpenter's Square

Let us now consider the second possible reconstruction of *normate*:

2. Normate could also be derived by using the *-ate* suffix to the Latin original *norma*. One meaning of the *-ate* suffix, occurring originally in nouns borrowed from Latin and in English coinages from Latin bases, that denote offices or functions (consulate, triumvirate, pontificate), as well as 'institutions' or collective bodies (electorate, senate); sometimes extended to denote 'a person who exercises such a function' (magistrate, potentate), an associated place (consulate), or a period of office or rule (protectorate). Joined to stems of any origin, *-ate* signifies the office, term of office, or territory of a ruler or official (caliphate; khanate; shogunate).

In both these reconstructions, the original Latin meaning of the root noun *norma* cannot be avoided. However, if we are to lean towards the first option, then we have an additional, deeper meaning of 'knowing' re-signifying *norma*, and therefore *norm* indicating 'expertise of a sentient agent'. I claim that this re-signification intensifies the rancidity of the previous semantics and therefore to be reclaimed.

Further, this re-signification creates a ternary progression of the Concept as well as Agency, as explained below. The possessor is dispossessed of its agency and the possessed of its abstractness. The linguistic analysis prompts a reconsideration of the obvious origin of

the lexeme 'normal' on the basis of these semantic and categorical shifts. To elaborate, note that from *know* to *expert (at)* to *measure* is a (three-step) change from Agent to Act/Process to State (that being a semantic shift), which also reflects a change of categories from Noun (Agent) to Verb (Act/ Process) to Adjective (State). I will map this change as a change from Agency to State. Similarly, on the side of the property possessed, that is, the knowledge itself, the change is from Knowledge to Skill to Measure/ Measurement. Again, this is a change from an abstract concept to a concrete implement. Thus, the semantic-categorical shift prompts a disinheritance of agency and concretisation of a concept. This hiding maligns the original reading further.

In a strange way then, Garland-Thomson's term of a veiled *subject* (and not 'veiled' by itself, as I argued above) after all makes sense since the agency is masked in the history of the word. This reading forces us to conclude that normality is not a state but a *being*. The normate in my interpretation is therefore this invisible sleeping giant with a mirrored exterior that I wish to identify to examine the pathologies of; let me designate this version of the *normate* with a capital N as *Normate*. At least, we now clearly know who the enemy is.

2.3 After Etymology

Identifying the true character of the *normate* is useful to then construct strategies to subvert/ dislodge it. One well-known strategy is to study disablism. Disablism is a set of assumptions that promote the practice of unequal treatment on the basis of actual or *presumed* disabilities (Campbell, 2009, p. 4). It has three components: (i) Prejudice, which can be further divided into attitudes and beliefs (Allport, 1954/1979) that affect the ways in which people value others in terms of their own group affiliation; (ii) Stereotype, which is prejudice towards a group.⁶ Some of the common stereotypes in the Indian context are: all deaf persons can read lips; blind persons acquire a sixth sense; blind persons have outstanding musical talent; persons with disabilities are more comfortable with 'their own kind', and persons with disabilities are innocent. In Bhattacharya (2011), based on a longitudinal study of these stereotypes, it was shown that 65–85% of respondents agree with these stereotypes; (iii) Discrimination. As per Shapiro (1999), prejudice and

stereotyping are the causes of disablism, but discrimination is the effect. Common discriminations are in the areas of employment, education, transportation, etc. Ordinarily, this list is seen as top-down, but it could also be a bottom-up process, from discrimination to stereotype. For example, in the case of the positive discrimination that the blind are musically talented, sociopolitical discrimination leads to the stereotype.

Given the ways in which disablism operates, there are specific ways of eradicating disablism: by reforming negative attitudes, through assimilation, and through benefits. While removing negative attitudes will constitute raising awareness, including awareness of rights, assimilation will directly indicate integration, which is not inclusion but the result of empathy. The third type of action definitely involves exercising one's rights. We can thus conclude that an emphasis on disablism leads to the rights perspective. However, I will show that this is not true inclusion either (Section 3.1.2).

This strategy of studying disablism re-inscribes disability onto the body of the disabled by applying an able-bodied voice/ lens towards disability. This can be seen in the claims that are often at the forefront of rights-based activism in disability. Disablism has been the basis of much activism, but it leads to the rights approach. As Fritsch (2015) notes, the rights movement, in its efforts to politicise the ableism that disabled people experience, replaces the heterogeneous world of impairment with a homogenised disability identity, which as she points out, reflects the emotion expressed by Garland-Thomson, where disabled people are thus identified as a 'highly marked, heterogeneous group whose only commonality is being considered abnormal' (Garland-Thomson, 1997, p. 24).

My proposal instead will be based on the newer concept of Ableism (Chouinard, 1997, among others)—the normality-which-is-to-be-assumed (Shakespeare, 1999). Accordingly, the strategy will be to reverse/ invert the traditional approach and study instead the production, operation and maintenance of ableism, which has been aptly termed studying the 'pathologies of non-disablement' (Hughes, 2007). Overboe (1999) and Campbell (2001) also point to the phenomenon of compulsive passing—the compulsion to pass off as a non-disabled—and they attribute 'ableist normativity' as the concept that works behind this phenomenon.

Campbell (2009, p. 4) suggests, and I agree, that what we need is 'ontological reframing' of various signifier norms in various branches of knowledge. For example, as Campbell points out, in the sciences, the species-typical body is considered to be the normative; in general sciences or specific domains of knowledge within the sciences, an atypical body is never the norm for studying, learning or teaching. In medical sciences, 'deformities' are measured as a proportion of the difference in comparison to a typical body. Similarly, the figure of a normative citizen is the dominant trope in political theory, whereas a reasonable man is the normative in law. Consider also in this connection the definition of 'objective circumstances' of Rawls' (1971/1999) theory of social justice, where persons entering a contract are 'roughly similar in mental and physical power'; such a definition excludes persons with disabilities from the ambit of social justice. Finally, in linguistics, spoken language is the norm for studying structural patterns of languages and their phonetic, morphological, syntactic and semantic properties. Thus, a crucial insight of how time can be viewed as space due to the modalities of the language is missing from the study of spoken languages (Bhattacharya & Hidam, 2011).

Sometimes the disabilism/ableism divide is not clear even to scholars who work with these concepts. For example, one known analysis of critical disability is in fashion (Garland-Thomson, 2002) where images of disabled fashion models are shown to be both complicit with and critical of the beauty system that oppresses all women (which Garland-Thomson calls 'inadvertent activism'). The example of Aimee Mullins that Garland-Thomson uses to exemplify 'resymbolisation', true to the conclusion above, is trying to fit into the existing paradigm of beauty and fashion, rather than questioning the standards of beauty and fashion prevalent in society. This is akin to disabilism where re-inscription takes place with an able-bodied lens. The standards of fashion as a manifestation of beauty or even the female body is not challenged, unlike let us say in case of the well-known breast cancer fund poster where mastectomy scars are displayed to de-sexualise breasts (mentioned in Garland-Thomson, 2002, p. 13).

This lesson, I will show in the next part (Part 3), is crucial in understanding the Integrative-Difference philosophy that I will outline and propose.

PART 3: THE RANT IN THE LOCUS

In this part, I wish to return to The Rant, especially the refrain, and locate the reason for it to remain a fable in the failure to isolate the melody out of the cacophony of the rights-based outcry. I will argue that an overemphasis on rights obscures the true yet simple nature of the inclusive philosophy, which then adversely affects day-to-day classroom activities.

3.1 Locating the Activist's Refrain in the Scholastic Locus

We have now identified the enemy—the invisible sleeping giant with a mirrored exterior or my *Normate*—and found a way to dislodge/ subvert it by studying the pathologies of the able. But to what end? In this section, I will elaborate my proposal of true inclusion in the form of Integrative-Difference Based Inclusion (IDBI), based on the ‘Principle of Centring’ (Bhattacharya, 2014a, b, c, e, 2016)—from which we have digressed far. It is specifically about identifying and dislodging the ableist normativity or the *Normate*. In short, I will propose that ableism leads to centring and centring *is* inclusion of the Integrative Difference type.

In Bhattacharya (2014b) I argued that inclusion can be achieved in three broad ways: (i) through empathy, (ii) as a matter of right, and (iii) through the Disability/ Dalit Centric Knowledge System. I will first show that both the empathy and rights-based approaches are wrong approaches to inclusion and that true inclusion or IDBI can be achieved only through centring knowledge.

3.1.1 Arguing against Empathy: Compassion as Charity

‘We want empathy, not sympathy’ is a popular statement, especially in the disability circuits in India.⁷ In the popular understanding of the term, empathy is perceived as one step deeper than sympathy, but a careful reconsideration of the concept reveals a different truth. Although helping others is sometimes considered genuinely other-oriented since the specific sensation associated with it reaches the brain via the other (de Waal, 2010), and though there is considerable support for the empathy-altruism hypothesis (if you empathise, you are more likely to help), we

often choose whether or not to empathise through an act of will. Thus, it is a product of a moral choice but not the cause of it (Bloom, 2013). In Scottish Enlightenment philosophy, coming to feel as the other feels was called ‘sympathy’, not empathy (Hume, 1740/1896; Smith, 1759/1853). There are other issues too that I discuss below.

The empathy-altruism hypothesis of Batson et al. (1997) states that empathy is motivated by an altruistic concern for the other’s welfare. However, many current theories of the self, which take the position that self can be located outside oneself (for example, in kinship relations, familiarity, perspective taking, etc.), affirm that people see parts of themselves in others. Thus, Cialdini et al. (1997) reason that empathy only highlights that part of the self which is located in others, in this case, in the target (beneficiary) of the empathetic act.

The connection between morality and altruism has also been challenged. Rawls (1971/ [1999]) has challenged this equation—to say that *A* (self-interest) is not *B* (moral) and that *C* (altruism) is not *A* does not mean that *C* is *B*. To say that oranges are not apples and that bananas are not oranges does not mean that bananas are apples. Nussbaum (2004) considers the presumed innocence of the person in need as a factor in determining the perception of the other in need, a perception that is an antecedent to empathic concerns. Batson (2011), a known defender of the morality-altruism connection, in responding to Nussbaum, mentions ‘vulnerability’ (and later on, ‘similarity’ [p. 42]), in effect agreeing with Nussbaum. In fact, Batson considers that perception of vulnerability is especially likely if the other is viewed as ‘comparatively defenseless and unaware of danger’. I deem this as highly problematic especially when one considers the so-called ‘person in need’ to be a person with disability. Defenceless vulnerability and being unaware of what is and what is desirable for oneself paints exactly the kind of pitiable picture of the person with disability when charity is aroused.

Further, Batson considers cognitive abilities, such as the recognition that the other has values, goals and intentions, as the primary requirement for who can perceive another as in need. Tomasello (1999) (as mentioned in Batson 2011, p. 37) shows that infants begin to recognise that others also have goals, intentions, desires and feelings normally at around 9–12 months. However, if the other is a sentient, intentional agent with values, goals, desires, and feelings, such a person (the person in need)

should not, at the same time, be judged to be vulnerable or unaware of the discrepancy between what is and what is desirable.

Finally, valuing the other's welfare is much more difficult to see for Batson (2011); therefore, none of the seven types of empathy that he lists has this as a component. We can, thus, say that this factor is imaginary and does not play an active role in his empathy-altruism hypothesis.

This inherent contradiction thus remains problematic for the most influential theory on the empathy-altruism hypothesis. In addition, Batson's theory depends on a crucial difference between the self and the other, otherwise it would not be possible to distinguish between altruism and egotism. The model further insists that feeling of altruistic emotion may even enhance the separatedness of self and other. Cialdini et al. (1997, p. 484) provide evidence to the contrary and consider newer theories of 'self as the other' and 'self in the other'. They measure helping measure and meditational measure where participants in an experiment rated their feelings through various indices, like, an emphatic concern index of being *sympathetic*, *compassionate*, *soft-hearted* and *tender*, as in Batson (2011); a personal distress of being *alarmed*, *worried*, *uneasy*; and a sadness of being *sad*, *low-spirited* and *heavy-hearted*. The subjects in their experiments were also asked about their use of the plural pronominal *we*. The consistent finding was that increased oneness led to increased help.

Empathy is also problematic from another perspective: there are many contexts where morality does not involve empathy, for example, deontological, self as a victim and victimless transgression. There are other cases of apparent empathy that seem to, in fact, trigger a more basic emotion like compassion. It has been suggested in studies (for example, Gallese et al., 1996), that empathy works through 'mirror neurons' (found in rhesus macaques and conjectured on that basis perhaps to be present in humans too), which are fired when the monkey watches other animals perform a task and when the monkey itself performs a task, indicating therefore that they don't distinguish between the self and the other. Self/ other criterion works to trigger empathy in the following way: X sees Y in pain, X feels pain through mirror neurons, X wants Y's pain to go away because by doing so X's pain will go away. Someone else's pain becomes your pain, transforming self-interest into compassion. In the domain of justice and equality, compassion is highly problematic because it leads to the feeling of charity.

3.1.2 *Arguing against Rights: The Larval Phase of Rights Activism*

As pointed out in section 2.3, the rights perspective, although the main arena for struggle towards entitlement in general, does not lead to true inclusion at least in the domain of education. The excessive focus on disablism and therefore the disabled body that is an unavoidable consequence of rights activism must end up highlighting ‘difference’ as the only signifier of disability, and in its zeal and clamour to snatch entitlements—even though most of the time only partial—the rights perspective remains unaware of the debris of the disability-as-difference that it carries along in its onrush. I wish to retain this metaphor by reading the current state of activism within the disability sector, and in particular within the domain of educational rights, as the larval stage, with the conviction that it will not remain neotenic and will undergo metamorphosis successfully only if it attends to the dual concerns of development and life-value that this paper proposes.

In keeping with the above, Bhattacharya (2010) shows that within the Indian contexts of education policies, the metaphor of special school raises its ugly head as we approach the 1990s. It may also be noted that much before any government document mentioned the education of children with disabilities, segregationist ideas were implanted in the domain of women’s education, when in 1948–49 the University Education Commission, although it expressed sentiments like the following, nevertheless established the concept of ‘special courses’ (GoI, 1962, p. 343):

There cannot be an educated people without educated women. If general education had to be limited to men or to women, that opportunity should be given to women, for then it would most surely be passed on to the next generation.

In the area of special courses, they list and justify home economics, nursing, teaching (primary and secondary schools), and the fine arts as desirable vocations for women. Further, the future of women’s education is shaped by what they call ‘redirection of interest’ to nursing, medical laboratory technology, dietetics, and other callings where the period of training and the expenses are less, since ‘to train a person who does not practice is a social loss.’

Little did we realise that when the rights agenda finally took on education, it zeroed in on sectorial entitlements for special education—a path already carved up by successive government documents where the theme of special schools attained increasing attention (and space) as we move along the 1990s. A simple comparison (as is done in Bhattacharya 2010) of the 1968 National Policy on Education (Kothari Commission, GoI, 1966) and the 1992 Programme of Action (GoI, 1992), proposed by the Ministry of Human Resources and Development will reveal that education for children with disability really became ‘special’ as we move nearer the present time. Once this route was laid, the rights body simply walked into the bait. This, as I discuss in the next sub-section, is the real neoliberal conspiracy where the conspiracy theorists themselves are trapped.

3.1.2.1 Problems with Rights-based Approaches

In the current larval stage, a rights approach to the education of children with disabilities participates ambiguously across universal and local discourse and is often insensitive to the diverse notions of rights and obligations across cultures; what is missing is a nuanced understanding of local power dynamics and relations between institutions bargaining for rights. Finally, as the history of rights-based activism (RBA) demonstrates, an organisational transformation reflecting diversity, tolerance and dignity—values that any rights-based unit must itself seek—that takes place as an epiphenomenon is lacking in organisations working for the education of children with disabilities in India.

As pointed out in Bhattacharya (2018, 2020), the social and political phenomena of the 1980s registered a change globally in the economic structure from the universal to the diverse and different, and within social theory, the grand narratives fell out of favour. Consequently, class identity was rejected in favour of a more pluralistic political and cultural identity. Thus, the new social theory laid emphasis on identity based on factors that lay outside the class structure. In a famous article, Williams (1992) calls this ‘fragmentations’, which placed more and more emphasis on demands upon welfare provisions about meeting localised and contextualised needs of particular groups, rather than universal entitlements to meet the demands of all.

As also pointed out in Williams (1992), the distrust in universalism and recognition of diversity also led to the emergence of ‘intersectionality’

as a significant theme in studies around that time, which stressed the need to characterise diverse groups as both discrete and uniform categories. However, intersectionality is the boat that the rights approach in education missed, with the result that caste, class, race, gender and disability never appeared as the basis of any rights approach to the education of children with disabilities in the Indian context. Thus, apart from missing concerns with the local power dynamics and organisational transformation, RBA can be faulted also on the less-than-sufficient attention paid to intersectionality. Within disabled peoples' organisations in the Indian context, often 'rights' translates into demands for justice towards entitlements, which obliterates rights differences across disabilities and even within disabilities, and the power dynamics at the local level.

This matter is, however, more subtle. Piron and Court (2003) distinguish between an 'empowerment' or inspirational approach to rights, highlighting social contestation and interventions, and a 'legalistic' or institutional approach based more on the morals of international human rights guidelines, emphasising strategies on behalf of the states to meet obligations. This is therefore a matter of significance: whether to adopt the empowerment approach or the legalistic approach. In my experience with the Equal Opportunity Cell of the University of Delhi, what we were trying (in the years 2006–2011) was to develop a legal instrument through the institutionalised empowerment approach in the belief that both empowerment and legal discourse must happen within the constitutional framework. In general, often enough policies and documents that lead to legal instruments are well-meaning and incorporate a lot of rights-based ideas but the resultant instruments are not effective enough since the broader framework under which an instrument is embedded is resistant to change. In such a scenario, the question of implementation of the philosophy of integrative difference that I propose (Section 3.1.3) attains significance. Until we develop a method that will ensure the incorporation of such a philosophy into actual instruments of legality, or even delivery—in the context of classroom practices—rights approaches can only be used as a strategy till they bring about a deterministic change in the educational system. Until then, our only weapon is to practice the philosophy of Integrative Difference in our educational practices.

As Bode et al. (2005) note, civil rights in democratic nations are accorded through the Constitution and they come about as a result of historic struggles like labour movements, civil rights movements and suffragette movements. Although in India there is a history of sporadic movements by blind persons fighting for their rights (identified as 'movement of the organised blind' in Chander, 2011), the country is yet to witness a major, national, cross-disability, mass movement that addresses the marginalisation of persons with disabilities. Until that happens, a negotiating instrument needs to be operational. The increasing use of a wide-ranging consultation process is one such instrument that has so far yielded some positive results, for example, in drafting the new Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill in 2012 (Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016). Advocacy, therefore, seems to be the most likely route to follow (Bhattacharya, 2016).

3.1.2.2 Rights and Development

This paper has referred to the decades of the 1980s and the 1990s in connection with the 'fragmentation' of Williams (1992) and the resurgence of the 'special schools' motif in educational policies, respectively. The decades of the 1990s is also a relevant period for two other related phenomena: (i) connecting rights with development and (ii) the interdependence, indivisibility and interrelatedness of political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights. This led to both development, and human rights institutions making efforts to incorporate each other's perspectives.

Article 62 of Chapter X of the UN Charter from 1945 comes close to linking development and human rights:

1. The Economic and Social Council may make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters and may make recommendations with respect to any such matters to the General Assembly, to the Members of the United Nations, and to the specialised agencies concerned.
2. It may make recommendations for the purpose of promoting respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966) (ICESCR) and its twin treaty, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), have a similar connection between development and right. The Declaration on the Right to Development (United Nations, 1986, 97th Plenary meeting):

Article 1.1. The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised.

ICESCR and ICCPR emerged after two decades as two treaties out of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, United Nations, 1948), which was not a treaty and therefore not legally binding on member states; it was another decade before these two covenants came into force. It first gave rise to conflict between the East and West, interested as they were more on Economic, Social, Cultural and Civil and Political rights, respectively. But the early support to ICESCR by the western bloc, brought the covenant into force.

The discourse on poverty too underwent a change from a moralistic one to an economic one to the current one based on governance. This is an outcome of the various transformations that the concept of development itself has undergone. At the initial stages, the World Bank considered development as 'growth'; however, UNDP in its 1990 Human Development Report (United Nations, 1990) considers development as a process of enlarging people's choices, which is rather similar to Sen's (1999) notion of development being 'the capability to lead the kind of lives we have reason to value'.

While development is concerned with the distribution of resources and access to services, a rights-based approach seeks to promote the accountability of duty-bearers (States and institutions), participation of right holders and equity or non-discrimination (Theis, 2003). The function of rights-based organisations is to support people to claim their rights.

Within the rights approach, in general, as argued by Ambedkar (1936/2014), schemes of social justice, for example, in the Indian Constitution, hold little meaning without accompanying distributional provisions based on the economic structure of the society. The question posed by Ambedkar—'Can you have economic reform without first

bringing about a reform of the social order?’—predicts the correct perspective on this. As Teltumbde (2012) convincingly argues, various constitutional provisions like protective measures, affirmative actions and development measures, constitute the ‘trap of liberal democracy’ meant to keep the marginalised class excluded to maintain the status quo. This can clearly be seen to be designed, as in the Narendra Jadhav task force that split up 68 ministries/ departments into four categories: (i) No obligation, (ii) Earmarking less than 15% for SCs (Scheduled Castes) and 7.5% for STs (Scheduled Tribes), (iii) Earmarking outlays between 15%–16.2% for SCs and 7.5%–8.2% for STs, and (iv) Earmarking more than 16.2% for SCs and 8.2% for STs. As the *Dalit Arthik Adhikar Andolan* (National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights) points out, this new approach of categorisation, instead of bridging the gap in SC/ST Special Plans, enhances the development gap whereby around 70% of the allocations are for survival and only 20% for development. Given our discussion in this section, it is clear that what Ambedkar hinted at was the inseparability of rights and development.

The transformation of UDHR into the covenants was intended to address pragmatic concerns about implementation, in particular, state capability and institutional justiciability. Clearly, implementation has been a concern from the beginning. Here, I undertake a careful re-examination of the rights discourse in order to understand why lack of implementation continues to be a characteristic of rights, even after they are made legally binding.

3.1.2.3 Development and Disability

In 1987 in the 42nd General Assembly of the UN, Resolution 42/58 was adopted (United Nations, 1987) to incorporate persons with disabilities in national development plans and to invite member states to incorporate in their national development plans and strategies, projects to assist disabled persons and to include such projects in the country programmes of UNDP. Further, in 1992 in Vancouver, the UN expert group meeting for implementation of the World Programme of Action (WPA) mentioned (United Nations, 1992): ‘disability issues should be incorporated into mainstream activities of intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations.’ In my reading, this is the first attempt to mainstream disability, although it was articulated in clear terms much later in the Economic and Social Council Resolution 2006/18, where

under 'Emerging Issues' the discussion of the topic was 'Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda'. The Preamble of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) adopted in 2006 thus emphasises 'the importance of mainstreaming disability issues as an integral part of relevant strategies of sustainable development.' Similarly, Article 32 of the Convention talks about the responsibility of state parties to support inclusive development.

In spite of the history of separating human rights from development, the Convention is both a human rights treaty and a development tool. It illustrates how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and suggests practical measures to create inclusive development programmes. This marked a paradigm shift in development, because it identifies disability as an issue to be considered in all programming, rather than having a stand-alone character. The logic of mainstreaming disability should therefore take the 'special' out of special education targeted towards children with disabilities.

Mainstreaming disability in development was based on the concept of gender mainstreaming that was defined in July 1997 during the 33rd meeting of the Economic and Social Council of the UN and listed under "Agreed conclusions 1997/2" (Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997, 1999, p. 23):

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality.

So, mainstreaming here is a two-step process: Assess and Include. The former involves assessment of the implications, and the latter involves including concerns and experiences of the target sector in design, implementation, etc. For successful 'mobility' of a person with disabilities in society, intercommunication between different entities is required and all policies (for example, housing, transport etc.) must address disability issues. That is why mainstreaming is essential.

In the ESC note from the 46th session of the UN 2008/6, it is conjectured that mainstreaming disability in the development agenda can be viewed in the same manner as above, that is, by ‘assessing’ and ‘including’. Note that including experiences and concerns in the design etc., is a *strategy*. This can be extended to the domain of education to claim that classroom-practices is a strategy that can make use of the concerns (for example, a blind student learning by the tactile method) and experiences (for example, the memory organisation strategy employed by a blind student) of students with disabilities. However, one difference between mainstreaming and inclusion in this domain is in the relative history of the introduction of the two concepts. While inclusion came via concerns with and later development in educational policies for children with disabilities, mainstreaming seems to have its origin in UN directives to state members and parties to following it as a guideline in policies and other documents and practices.

The ‘assessing’ part of the mainstreaming definition can also be followed in Integrative Difference-based Inclusion that I propose in Section 3.1.3. When the teacher asks the question *what implication this particular lesson has for a blind child*, she automatically assesses the usefulness of the particular lesson for the child. Recall that ‘assessing’ is a *process* in the definition of mainstreaming gender. That is, it becomes part of the teacher’s guide to follow by asking such a question of every lesson and its outcomes.

To understand the relationship between ‘assessing’ or process and ‘strategy’, let us briefly look at the meanings of these two words. A process is ‘a systematic series of actions directed to some end’, whereas strategy dominantly means ‘the science and art of combining and employing means of war in planning and directing large military movements and operations’; it also has the meaning ‘series of manoeuvres to obtain a specific goal’, this latter meaning being quite similar to the meaning of process. Though at one level both these words have one common meaning of ‘goal-directed actions’, a strategy is a more definite plan of action. Such a difference in meaning may obtain if we look at the etymology of these words. Process is derived from the Latin *prōcessus* ‘going forward’, which is derived from *prō* + *ced* (<*cēdere*) + *tus*⁸, where *prō* has the meaning ‘projecting forward’, and *cēdere* meaning ‘to yield or formally surrender to another.’ Note that the semantic field of the word does not contain anything like a plan, whereas the word strategy,

of a much later Greek origin from *stratēgia* ‘generalship’ from *strateg(os)* ‘military commander or general,’ which not only has a plan-semantics but also a planner-semantics, making it more definite. I will conclude this discussion by noting that this analysis can be further consolidated by suggesting that mainstreaming anything has a theoretical or conceptual side (process) and practical or implementation side (strategy); and as discussed above, both of these can be extended to classroom practices.

3.1.2.4 The Trickle-down Effect of the Rights-based Approach (RBA)

This section critiques the rights-based approach (RBA) based on observations made in Section 3.1.2 that RBA being at a larval stage is unaware that it is carrying the disability-as-difference debris along with it. I will consolidate by suggesting that even the international treaties that we have been discussing so far, lay greater emphasis on structural changes that an RBA ought to occasion.

Within the theme of mainstreaming disability in all development, discussed in Section 3.1.2.3, it is suggested that integration or mainstreaming of persons with disabilities must not be tied to the benefits they can accrue, but that they should be increasingly represented in the management of development activities and organisations at all levels. Here, although the approach advocates something beyond simply benefits, it only highlights a management re-arrangement criterion, that is, a structural reorganisation of a certain development activity. It does not suggest a total change in perspective. These approaches believe in the ultimate trickle-down effect of such structural rearrangements—and that is where I locate the rights-based activism practised in India today. In fact, the slogan repeated ad nauseam without much understanding, ‘Nothing about us without us’, is the source of this *form* of activism which is dedicated to bringing about a *formal* change in the organisational set-ups without any concern for a radical overhauling of the concepts and ideas behind disability. This is a sentiment also expressed in Chander (2011, p. 30) as an aside:

... [N]or there has been any serious attempt by the leaders of the movement of the organised blind in India to question the traditional misconceptions relating to blindness and to challenge, explain, interpret, define, or redefine the vocabulary in the field of blindness.

That is, activism is more geared towards practical concerns rather than philosophical ones. The UN model, I claim, is suggesting exactly

that—structural changes. So, I will have to assume that it believes in a trickle-down effect, that is, over a period, structural change will usher a change in thinking.

The point is, however, that this is *not* inclusion. Thus, the difference that we had referred to earlier between mainstreaming and inclusion is really centred around this perspective; mainstreaming depends on a trickle-down effect and is more a managerial and practical solution, whereas inclusion is a radical shift in the ethos, a change of paradigm and a change in thinking. The rights-based approaches push for a change in the managerial structuration but not for a philosophical paradigm shift. To me, it seems like a collective metaphysical stupefaction. That is why any mention of a conceptual shift in classroom practices is perceived as lacking in activism (since a rights-based approach is not the trigger for such a change), and therefore a tool in the hands of the (often invisible) neoliberal.

3.1.2.5 The Life-value Approach to Rights

The dominant western concept of how much of what everyone should get as a matter of right, problematic as it is, led to a tradition that is divorced from what matters most to people's lives—their life-value. This gave rise to the life-value approach to social justice. Rawls' 'primary goods' are 'things that every rational man is presumed to want. These goods normally have a use whatever a person's plan of life. For simplicity's sake, assume that the chief primary goods at the disposition of society are rights, liberties and opportunities, and wealth and income' (Rawls, 1971/1999, p. 54). However, these are goods that are primary in a capitalist market system, whereas goods of primary value to a human life are resources, practices, institutions, and relationships supporting and enabling life-activity.

John McMurtry, the major theorist on life-value, notes (McMurtry, 2011, p. 11):

The deepest problem we have with rights in general is that we have no life-value criterion whereby to tell whether a right is good or bad. Thus the dominant rights of our epoch—property rights in money capital—remain presupposed even if they cumulatively threaten terrestrial and human life organization by their globally life-blind demands.

This is one way of looking at rights. However, even this approach cannot give up rights. What McMurtry alerts us to is the importance

of re-examining the prevalent rights discourse. Looking at rights for rights' sake only instrumentalises rights. Many institutions, whether intergovernmental or non-governmental, do exactly that—they *use* rights. Rights cannot remain as only the *means*, but it must also be the *ends*. McMurry's little-known framework of life-value onto-axiology (McMurtry, 2010) at least initiates an alternative.

Locke's (1688/ 1980) second and third conditions for entitlement to private property (or 'natural right'), namely, (i) 'always good enough left for others' and (ii) 'no wastage or spoilage' of it, identifies justifications for private property as life-grounded criteria since it sets a limit to owner's needs. This is different from some recent liberalist stands; for example, Sen's (1999) 'reason to value' is non-specific and can be potentially limitless. McMurry's theory on the other hand considers that life-valuable forms are limited by considerations of the life-interests of other creatures and human beings; his *life-coherence principle* (McMurtry, 2010) establishes the materially rational limits to individual and system demands.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights discussed in Section 3.1.2.2 ensures fulfilment of many of the values that are at the centre of modern views on social justice, such as access to employment, education and healthcare provision. This can be seen as the first connection between human rights and social justice, in general, and through the notion of human flourishing as a life-grounded social justice, in particular. Apart from this obvious connection of rights with the life-value theory that is missing in Rights-Based Activism, the ineffective adjudication issue due to these rights being only contextually natural also signals that since the existence of alternative value conception in society cannot be denied, we need to address ways to resolve such conflicts between values.

McMurtry (2010, p. 73), (as stated in Baruchello and Johnstone, 2011, p. 97) proposes that life-values are understood under the *primary value axiom: x is of value if and only if and to the extent that x consists in or enables a more coherently inclusive range of thought/ experience/ action*. The life-value framework thus regards life as unfolding along three modes of ontological manifestations, namely, thought, experience and action; education is therefore a part of one of the primary ontologies, namely, thought.

McMurtry (2002, p. 156) (as stated in Baruchello and Johnstone, 2011, p. 105) offers a Well-Being Index (WBI) comprising 'the complete

and universal set of needs which all humans require to be met in order to flourish'. He considers the prerequisites of adequate life as 'needs' and distinguishes them from 'want' or 'desire', which can never be satiated and whose deprivation do not cause harm but cause a rearrangement of life's priorities. His model's emphasis on flourishing recalls one of the first proposals in the domain of moral or basic rights. Shue (1980) builds in 'enjoyment' as a feature of moral right, although the separation is well-known, as in a person having a right but not being able to enjoy it. For example, Right to Education (RTE, 2009) is a primary right for school education but if the buildings, paths, transport are not accessible, a child with disabilities cannot enjoy that right.

Thus, another issue the rights approach faces is the difference between having a right and enjoying or exercising it. One way to ameliorate that confusion would be to say what Shue (1980, p. 20) says about his concept of a moral right:

It is not merely that people should 'have' their other rights in some merely legalistic or otherwise abstract sense compatible with being unable to make any use of the substance of the right.

This would mean that a moral layer over and above the conceptualisation of rights is needed to bridge the gap between having and enjoying a right. Structurally, though, it is possible to see integrative difference-based inclusion (IDBI) as a basic right for a child with disability if we follow Shue's definition of basic right (calling it Shue's Algorithm) and constructing equivalences as shown in a tabular form as in Table 17.1.

TABLE 17.1 An Illustration of Shue's Definition of a Basic Right and its Equivalences

	<i>Shue's algorithm</i>	<i>Non-disabled example</i>	<i>Disabled person example</i>
1	Everyone has a right to something	Right to vote	Right to vote
2	Some other things are necessary for enjoying the first thing as a right, whatever the first thing is	Necessary to have the name in voter's list, implies people with addresses, etc.	Necessary to have accessible transport, path, Braille machine, signage etc.
3	Everyone also has rights to the other things that are necessary for enjoying the first as a right	Right to have name in voter's list, implies people with addresses	Right to have accessible transport, path, Braille machine, signage etc.

Thus, we can view IDBI as a basic right since it is indispensable to anything else being enjoyed as a right, especially the right to education, for a child with disability.

3.1.3 *The Philosophy of Integrative Difference*

Having established Integrative Difference-Based Inclusive Education (IDBIE) as a basic right in the previous section, I return to what the paper started with, namely, the stylistic device depicting the central idea pictorially represented in Figure 17.1 to elaborate the philosophy of Integrative Difference that constitutes the background for IDBIE.

The philosophy of Integrative Difference that I have been trying to push for some time now can be represented as in Figure 17.3.

Integrative Difference

FIGURE 17.3 Representation of Integrative Difference

Integrative Difference is a philosophy that imbibes the methodology of inclusion and at its core, it assumes that difference is the norm. This issue presents itself often in classroom situations. Established, state-sponsored education systems are geared towards levelling out any difference, since homogeneity is considered to be the norm, surrounded by false diversity, which I have termed ‘multidimensionality by habitation’ (see Part 2).

My work in this domain for the last few years (Bhattacharya, 2014a, b, c, e), emphasises on what I call the process of ‘De/centring’, which is a process of continuous displacement of the centre of knowledge-making. This can be achieved through interaction and classroom practices and can be at the core of teacher training. It is not impractical and therefore doable, as I have demonstrated elsewhere (Bhattacharya, 2014e). This can be efficiently achieved through linguistics, that is, through the lessons we learn from linguistics as a science. Linguistics is not only a leveller in its most democratic and ever-lasting idea that all human children are born equal, but it also teaches us two great lessons in education: universality and inclusion. I argue in favour of the latter as the notion of true inclusion. For Universal Grammar (UG) to hold true, there must be differences across languages. Thus, by definition, UG

must imply difference to exist (Bhattacharya [2013] uses this concept in the context of education). Applying this lesson to education and to a classroom situation, we see that difference is the norm and an emergent universalism (in spite of the differences) is the lesson outcome for the learners.

The UN guidelines are clear from even 1992 (United Nations, 1992) on what it means by inclusion (World Programme Action, para 89):

Matters concerning disabled persons should be treated within the appropriate general context and not separately. Each ministry or other body within the public or private sector responsible for, or working within, a specific sector should be responsible for those matters related to disabled persons that fall within its area of competence.

Similarly, The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, adopted in 1993, clearly states (SR 14.4):

The needs and concerns of persons with disabilities should be incorporated into general development plans and not be treated separately.

My idea then is just an extension of that idea of inclusion in the sphere of education.

As I noted earlier, it is disablism that accounts for the rights approach to inclusion by eradicating negative attitudes, encouraging assimilation and providing benefits. These measures by themselves merely enforce inclusion of the disabled student as part of the mainstream classroom, but do not encourage the philosophy of inclusion. The true meaning of inclusion can be achieved only in this way: by bringing about a radical change in the perspective and creating a new ethos of learning for *everyone*. Thus, it is not a struggle for the rights of one group and it does not demand empathy. My specific proposal is that by shifting the gaze to exploration of the epistemologies and ontologies of ableism we are led to centring, and centring *is* inclusion.

It is clear that inclusion is called upon only if there is diversity. A prerequisite for centring, which is at the heart of my proposal for integrative inclusion, is thus the existence of diversity; apart from the lessons from linguistics, I take Barbara McClintock's (Keller, 1985/1995) philosophy to be crucial in this:

If the material tells you, 'It may be this', allow that. Don't turn it aside and call it an exception, an aberration, a contaminant.... That's what's happened all the way along the line with so many good clues.... The

important thing is to develop the capacity to see one kernel of maize that is different, and make that understandable. *If something doesn't fit, there's a reason, and you find out what it is.* [emphasis mine](quoted in Keller, 1985/1995, p. 163)

Thus, McClintock advocates finding the larger *multidimensional* pattern; so that difference is not a one-off thing—this is the idea of diversity that we wish to understand.

Once we have identified the pathologies of the *Normate* individual, behaviour, and practice, we are ready to explore the ableist normativity in those locations. Activism, tempered with development goals and life-value, would then involve inverting or dislodging that ableist centre by alternative ways of being/ knowledge. This is what constitutes the principle of centring and the Integrative Difference philosophy; and once the inversion is effected, true inclusion would have been occasioned through a dislocation of the centre.

NOTES

1. This is a replica sans the colours of the first slide of a presentation of the same name made at the 'Inequalities in India' conference held at the University of Delhi, on November 28, 2014, which forms the basis of the present written-up version; it is important to establish this historiography since this stylistic device to depict 'difference' has since made its appearance elsewhere without acknowledgement.

2. Here too, I retain the original title.

3. The French term *dispositif(s)* is used by Foucault (1976, p. 99) to mean 'meticulous rituals of power', something that subjects are caught in networks of power that lie beyond their control. Thus, *dispositifs* are not created by actors, or easily identifiable, or definable, but rather can only be discovered through genealogical research.

4. Gouri Hari Das is an 88-year-old freedom fighter who had to fight the Indian bureaucracy for 32 years to get a freedom fighter's certificate. His story has now been made into a film titled *Gouri Hari Dastaan: The Freedom File*, released in August 2015.

5. <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/normate> (November, 2014).

6. 'When prejudice takes on the form of a specific belief regarding a particular group, it is a stereotype' (Bogdan & Knoll, 1988, p. 467).

7. The last time I remember hearing this was in January 2014 uttered by Pavan K. Muntha, a blind activist based in Hyderabad during the *Inclusive Education*:

English language Classroom and Disabilities workshop at the Hyderabad Central University campus, Hyderabad.

8. *-tus* is simply a past participle suffix.

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