

Society's Interpretation of Disability is Crucial, Says Expert Dr Ishwar Desai

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Ishwar Desai giving a presentation at BPA on Thursday

It is society's interpretation of disability that is more important when dealing with it, said **Dr Ishwar Desai**, an expert from The Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, Australia.

In a presentation on 'Inclusion – Classroom Management' at The Blind People's Association (BPA) on Thursday, Desai said, "It is not disability, but society's interpretation of disability that makes a person deviant. It is necessary for every teacher to understand how to respond to the uniqueness of the specially-abled children by increasing their presence, acceptance and participation."

He backed his presentation with findings of researchers done by Inclusion International, one of the largest NGOs in the world and ranked in the top five. Desai gave a detailed understanding of the concept of 'inclusive education' by explaining its importance.

He said he is driven by the belief that inclusive education is a process of removing barriers and enabling all students, including those with disabilities, to learn and participate effectively within regular school systems. He also enlightened the audience with a new concept, quite popular in foreign countries, called 'full inclusion' which means 100 per cent participation of the disabled children in normal class situations. This new concept requires commitment to educate each child. "In the past one decade, there have been significantly greater efforts to include people with disabilities in all aspects of life in India but more needs to be done," he concluded.

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