



We've Got mail!

Menstruation in girls: Necessary sensitivity among teachers, schools, and society

Reading Rubina Khan's article 'Menstruation in Girls – How it Impacts Their Learning' in this issue made me realise that we often look at inclusion only in the context of children with special needs, even though a much larger group, considered 'normal,' faces challenges of a different nature. Adolescent girls form one such significant group, which struggles every month, for three to five days, due to the difficulties of menstruation and the outdated societal beliefs surrounding it.

The girls' dilemmas and the teachers' and school administrations' insensitivity towards this issue, revealed through Rubina's conversations with the girls clearly show that without addressing this matter properly, the conversation on inclusion will remain incomplete.

Anil Singh, Faculty, Parag Library Educator Course, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

A school for all, built through unmatched efforts

In Kusum Lata Sharma's piece, 'The school belongs to everyone...,' in the 'Pages from Teachers' Diaries' column, the efforts described to bring children from diverse social backgrounds together are remarkable. The author's attempts to sit and eat with the children, uniting them without using any verbal instructions, is commendable. This new column will provide information about the academic and non-academic experiences of teachers in classrooms and schools. It is a unique initiative. Kudos to the *Pathshala* team for presenting the new issue in a fresh format.

Chhaya, Assistant Teacher, Primary School Aurangpur, Mirpur Lakhavati, Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh

Enjoyed 'In the Company of Books' and 'Pages from Teachers' Diaries'

Pathshala's special issue on inclusive education is worth reading in light of the New Education Policy 2020. The cover image itself compels readers to pause and reflect.

Madhu Kushwaha's article 'Enrolment Alone Is Not Enough for Inclusion' should be read by teachers, parents, as well as school administrators alike.

In this issue, I enjoyed the columns In the Company of Books and *Pages from Teachers' Diaries*. Rubina Khan's article on menstruation and its relation to girls' learning is a crucial piece on an important subject. It seems essential to include a complete training module on menstruation in in-service teacher training.

Manohar Chamoli 'Manu,' Government Inter College, Kaleshwar, Pauri, Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand

The need for inclusive thinking on menstruation in girls

I found Rubina Khan's article, 'Menstruation in Girls – How it Impacts Their Learning' in this issue to be very important to today's education system. The author's efforts to share her experiences demonstrate how poor menstrual health facilities, lack of products, information (education), and support, negatively impact girls' school attendance, academic performance, and retention. A closer look reveals that several factors affecting a child's education are often invisible but require applying inclusive thinking.

Nidhi Choudhary, Assistant Teacher, Primary School Bangla Puthri, Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh

'I cannot sing, I cannot dance, I cannot act'

This special issue on inclusive education helped me truly understand the real meaning of inclusion. The articles aided in changing the narrow definition of inclusiveness, in which we associate it only with children who have special needs.

Deepika Jhala and Mamta Singh's articles showed me how a teacher's compassionate behaviour can bring about the expected change. I found Deepika Sharma's 'Teacher's Role in Making the Arts Truly Inclusive' resonated deeply with our

experiences. Since a young age, many of us have believed, 'I can't sing, I can't dance, I can't act,' because these arts are perceived in relation to rigid standards of perfection. That's how many art forms never become a part of our lives. Perhaps none of us could experience inclusive education in the truest sense. Inclusive thought creates hope for future generations.

Parul Batra Duggal, Azim Premji Foundation, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

'Let's do Some Activities' – A crucial initiative

The magazine, in its new format, looks fantastic, and I found this special issue fascinating and valuable in many ways. We had not been able to consider inclusion in education in such a comprehensive and nuanced context. The articles, enriched with experiences and examples, are all worth reading. In particular, I liked the articles by Jayna Jagani and Reema Kaur, Vishnu Gopal, Mamta Singh, and Rubina Khan. The newly introduced columns, such as 'Teachers Inspiring Hope,' 'In the Company of Books' and 'Pages from Teachers' Diaries', were also meaningful, and I enjoyed reading them. The issue strengthened my belief in the possibilities of improving education. The 'Let's do Some Activities' appears to be a crucial initiative, which is directly aiding classroom learning.

We did the 'Inclusive Musical Chairs' Activity

I could deeply relate to Madhumalti's 'Teach children the way they want to learn' in Issue 22 of *Pathshala*. The piece mentioned that when it comes to libraries, we should understand the kind of books children need and make those available to them. Our school has this facility, there are many kinds of books in the library, which children can read according to their interest. Some children choose storybooks, some choose books with more pictures. I have also seen some children draw pictures they like in their notebooks. I also tried the music activity given in the section 'Let's do Some Activities' at my school. The children thoroughly enjoyed it.



Suchandra Rudra, Assistant Teacher, GMS Chadri Ranchi-1, Jharkhand

Niketa Tiwari, Government Senior Secondary School, Kiran Path, Mansarovar, Jaipur, Rajasthan

The new issue: Attractive presentation

Issue 22 of *Pathshala* is fabulous. It inspires us to think about and understand inclusion in a holistic way. The articles 'Enrolment Alone is Not Enough for Inclusion' and 'Right to Learn is Equal for All' were particularly impactful. Other regular columns and articles were also excellent. The design and presentation were attractive. Congratulations to the editorial team.

Rani Kumari, Middle School Jagsu Jamalpur, Darbhanga, Bihar

A child's caste, attire, marks and physique should not be a cause for discrimination

In Mamta Singh's article 'Affection and Equality Facilitate Learning in Students' in Issue 22, I read the story of a school in Uttar Pradesh, which seemed no different from my home state, Chhattisgarh. The girl in the story comes from a tribal community, and for her, sitting and eating with other children in school is not an easy task at all. In my classroom, I will ensure that a child's caste, attire, academic performance, or physique do not become grounds for discrimination.

Until now, my understanding of inclusion was limited to children with physical or mental disabilities. But the problem is not limited to that. This issue has expanded my perspective.

Archana Chandrakar, Government Primary School, Chagorabhata, Dharsiwa (Raipur Urban), Raipur, Chhattisgarh

A comprehensive issue on an essential topic

The *Pathshala* special issue on inclusive education is a well-rounded edition on an important subject. I enjoyed Madhu Kushwaha's article. The piece by Sujata Ravi and Dasanna Mareddy were also highly sensitive and practical. In her article, Rubina Khan has linked the common problem of menstruation in girls, which often goes unnoticed, with the processes of teaching with great sensitivity, which provides a new perspective on understanding menstruation. I found the columns 'Pages from Teachers' Diaries' and 'In the Company of Books' interesting.

Arun Shankar Rai, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

Curiosity about knowing more about inclusion increased

Reading the *Pathshala* special issue on inclusive education greatly expanded my understanding. I learnt many new things from it. Such topics are rarely discussed in such simple and accessible language. R Lalmachhuani's article sparked my curiosity to learn more about this subject.

Chetna Gola, Program Producer, National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

Prompted me to reassess my understanding of art

After reading Deepika Sharma's article 'Role of Teachers in Making the Arts Truly Inclusive' in the December 2024 issue of *Pathshala*, I felt the need to reassess my own understanding of art. I realised that in our classrooms, art is often limited to just drawing or colouring pictures. This article, however, elaborated on the inclusive forms of art and the various methods of engaging children in collective artistic activities, which makes this an extremely useful read.

Lucky Singh, Assistant Teacher, Composite School, Jaddapur, Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh

Teachers should understand children's problems and support them

Reading the story of Harshita and Mayur in Jayna Jagani and Reema Kaur's article 'Small Steps to Inclusive Practices' (Issue 22) made me see how teacher Babita understood the needs of both children and helped them become part of the learning process. This aspect of learning is particularly useful for me, as I have two children in my class who do not engage in reading or writing at all and remain passive throughout the lessons. I often feel frustrated with them. This article made it clear that an important aspect of including such children in the classroom for learning is that the teacher understands their problems and provides help according to their needs.

Inclusion is not just about a child being mentally or physically challenged. There are many classroom dynamics that can hinder a child's participation, and it is important to notice and address them.

Samsun Nisha, Government Primary School, Tilak Nagar, Gudiyari, Dharsiwa, Raipur (Urban), Chhattisgarh

Inclusion: An attempt to understand at an emotional level

I received *Pathshala*'s special issue on inclusive education. Though reading the soft copy was a bit difficult, the issue was so well curated and focused on such an important topic that I had no option but to keep reading. I particularly liked the articles by Mamta Singh, Deepika Jhala, Jayna Jagani, and Reema Kaur, which attempt to understand inclusion at an emotional level; otherwise, we often tend to address inclusion only at a superficial level. Sections like 'Teachers Inspiring Hope,' 'Pages from Teachers' Diaries,' and the activities section contribute significantly to making this magazine stand out as a meaningful effort.

Shashank Shekhar, Adarsh High School, Badhupar, Kaimur, Bihar

Translated from Hindi by Eklavya, Bhopal