

Comparison of Indian and German systems of inclusion in education for the children with disabilities

A. INTRODUCTION

Promoting inclusion is about reforming the education system. Inclusive education is much more cost-effective than a segregated system, not only in terms of the running costs but also the long-term costs on the society (UNESCO, 2005). Inclusive education means that all students, regardless of any physical, mental, social or personal capacities and abilities are allowed to participate in regular schools in their neighborhood. Inclusion ranges from extending the scope of ordinary schools so that they can include a greater diversity of children (Clark et al., 1995). It is a set of principles that ensures that the student with a disability is viewed as a valued and needed member of the community in every respect (Uditsky, 1993). Inclusion is not focusing on an individual or small group of pupils for whom the curriculum is adapted, different work is devised or support assistance is provided about how to assimilate individual pupils with identified special educational needs into existing forms of schooling (Vislie, 2003). There is a probability that students with disabilities who attend special schools will continue to participate in a variety of integrated settings throughout their lives (Ryndak and Alper, 1996). It offers the opportunity for students without SEN to learn to communicate, and deal effectively with a wide range of individuals which prepares them to fully participate in a pluralistic society when they are adults ((Ryndak and Alper, 1996).

Inclusive education in India

At the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality (Salamanca, Spain 1994), the principle of inclusive education was adopted. The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994) emerged as a result of deliberations held by more than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations in June 1994. India being a signatory to the Salamanca Statement is committed to providing education through mainstream schools for children with disabilities under PWD ACT, 1995. The aim of the Indian government to the Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) cannot be fully achieved without taking care of the special educational needs of disabled children. Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) Action Plan aims to complement and supplement IEDC Integrated Education for Disabled Children and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

programs in the movement from integration to inclusion; enrolment and retention of all children with disabilities in the mainstream education system; providing need-based educational and other support in mainstream schools to children; reviewing implementation of existing programmes, provisions to identify factors leading to success or failure of the drive towards enrollment and retention of children with disabilities in mainstream educational settings; generating awareness in the general community; development of national norms for Inclusive Education to set standards of implementation, training, monitoring and evaluation for the program; provide inputs in all pre-service and in-service training for mainstream and special education teachers; and resource services support through appointment of special educators, rehabilitation professionals, provision of resource rooms, etc to support mainstream school teachers in the classrooms.

.It is important to create an inclusive environment in the classroom for all children, especially children with disabilities (National Curriculum Framework, 2005). The NCERT recommended inclusive schools for all as a way to provide quality education to all learners, (NCFSC, 2000). Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was launched to achieve the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education and a zero rejection policy has been adopted, which ensures that every child with Special Needs (children with disabilities), irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided meaningful and quality education. under education for children with special needs, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provides early detection and identification, functional and formal assessment, educational placement, aids and appliances, support services, teacher training, resource support, individual educational plan (IEP), parental training and community mobilization, planning and management, strengthening of special schools, removal of architectural barriers, research, monitoring and evaluation and a special focus on girls with special needs. The teacher training course curriculum of general pre-service training programs neither fully equips the teachers and teacher educators to deal with the children with disabilities nor it equips them to manage the mild and moderately disabled children in general classrooms. Different kinds of teacher training programs are being implemented under SSA to orient elementary teachers towards Inclusive Education. At present all the educational schemes of inclusive education tend toward universalization of primary education. Inclusive Education is not only the alternative measures for children with disabilities for want of separate special schools for these children but it is a scientific well-thought strategy for their overall development; of course, it is cost-effective and doubly suitable for a developing country like India.

Inclusive Education in Germany

Support and guidance for people with disabilities in Germany are ensured by a legal framework, subject to the Basic Law (Grundgesetz) and the Social Code (Sozialgesetzbuch). In 2009, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force in Germany. The federal government and the Länder states have since taken measures to guarantee the human rights of persons with disabilities; prevent discrimination against persons with disabilities; and take appropriate legislative, administrative and other steps to achieve the objectives of the Convention.

With the ratification of the UN Disability Rights Convention in 2009, Germany has obliged to represent and defend the rights of disabled people. There, especially article 24 concentrates on the education of disabled students. The individual federal states in Germany are striving to change their legal regulations and school laws to guarantee equal participation and individual support in school. In education, school legislation was amended respectively newly adopted to allow for the inclusion and support of students with disabilities into the mainstream education system.

Therefore, they currently develop new programs, redesign schools and classrooms, work on the training of teachers and cooperate with other professions to suit the individual needs of each student. Inclusive schools in Germany try to promote and focus on the student's strengths, aim to develop a school culture of respect and belonging and make an effort to offer an educational program all children can benefit from many schools are changing or developing new concepts or guidelines which aim to reduce exclusion, discrimination, and barriers to learning so that differences between children are seen as resources for learning. Even though Germany signed the UN charter nearly a decade ago, many still see inclusive education as a burden.

B. The rationale of study

In Germany, although disabled students legally have the right to attend a regular school, the school is allowed to mention reservations if the school's personal, material or spatial conditions cannot fulfill the children's individual needs. This slows down the progress of inclusive learning and demand that many German schools have to modify, develop and change their attitudes towards a human rights-based approach. Apart from the right to be educated at a regular school it

also has to be mentioned that all children with disabilities also have the opportunity to go to a special needs school if this is their will. The recommendations of the Education Ministers' Conference (KMK) as well as international influences, like for example the Salamanca Declaration of the UNESCO have certainly expedited the development of inclusive learning in Germany. But it will still be the task of the individual federal states to introduce collaborative learning and make it an important issue. Germany has made little progress in moving special-needs children from special to regular schools. In India, various initiatives for the teaching of children with special needs (children with disabilities) along with normal children in mainstream schools are being taken at different levels but still, 95 percent of these children are out of mainstream schools. Even the schools where inclusive education is in operation, infrastructural facilities required for inclusive teaching-learning processes are poor (Kumar, 2007). The required qualification and training of teachers dealing with children with disabilities along with normal children is also not adequate. But still, the government is working hard to provide universal education to children with disabilities under inclusive education. After reviewing the related literature, it was conceived to compare the Indian and German systems of inclusion in education for children with disabilities so that successful strategies concerning inclusive education of both countries shall be evolved.

C. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this study is to determine what similarities and differences exist in the systems of inclusion of education of children with disabilities between India and Germany.

D. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the differences and similarities between International laws, national laws, policies and regulations governing the inclusion of education of children with disabilities and their implementation in India and Germany?
2. What are the difference and similarities between the status and functioning of inclusive schools for children with disabilities in India and Germany?
3. What are the differences and similarities between teacher education for inclusive education of children with disabilities in India and Germany?
4. What are the differences and similarities in the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education of children with disabilities in India and Germany?

E. INSTRUMENTS

To collect data from different sources, the researchers shall prepare schedules/instruments to answer the research questions.

a. Research question 1:

For research question 1, the data to be collected shall be:

1. Different international laws governing the inclusion of education and their implementation in India and Germany.
2. National laws, Acts, policies, and regulations governing the inclusion of education and their implementation in India and Germany.
3. Other initiatives by Indian and German governments to accelerate the inclusion of education.

b. Research question 2: For research question 2, the data shall be collected as given in Table 1 and 2 for a comparative study of status and functioning of inclusive schools in India and Germany which was prepared after an in-depth understanding of an exhaustive review available on the inclusive education system of both the countries (Index for developing inclusive schools, NCERT; NCF,2005; NCERT, 2000).

Table 1: Comparative study of status of inclusive schools in India and Germany

I.	STATUS OF INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS IN INDIA AND GERMANY				
1.	Total number of inclusive schools	India	Relative percent (India)	Germany	Relative percent (Germany)
i.	Government				
ii.	Private				
iii.	NGO (Non-government Organizations)				
2.	Total no of children enrolled in inclusive schools				

Table 2: Comparative study of functioning of inclusive schools in India and Germany

II. FUNCTIONING OF INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS	INDIA	GERMANY
<p>A. School philosophy and management</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The school vision reflects the idea that the school exists for all students 2. The school has a policy of interacting with the parents on how to support their child's learning 3. The school strictly discourages any kind of discrimination and violence amongst the students 4. The school welcomes and gives encouraging message to all parents in the neighborhood to send their children to the school 5. The school has developed linkages with the early intervention programmes for identification of needs of children with disabilities 6. The school has developed systems to provide for counselling of the parents 7. Teachers, parents, communities and learners in the school believe and share a philosophy of inclusive education 8. The school regularly evaluates and reviews its policies with the changing needs related to the child's learning process 9. Acquisition of social skills is also valued along with academic skills in the school 10. The school's management committee has a parent of child with disabilities and of a child belonging to the socially disadvantaged groups as a member 11. The school makes use of data for improving school planning and management 12. There is a partnership with institutions of higher learning, governmental organisations, and NGOs to promote participation of children with disabilities in all aspects of education 13. The school values the participation of all parents irrespective of their background, religion or socio- economic status, etc. 14. The school gives admission to all children in the neighborhood without following any strict admission procedures 15. The school has a policy of reducing class size , especially of classes where children with disabilities are placed 16. Admission, retention, and full participation of children in all aspects of duration must not be subjected to any criteria based on assessment tests and judgment by professionals and experts, including psycho-medical certificates. 17. The school rejects the policy to fail the students with disabilities 18. No child with disabilities is asked to produce certificates either for admission, examination, getting support facilities/ scholarships, etc. 19. School planning takes into account the diversity of population involving children with special needs, children belonging to socially disadvantaged groups, etc. are made to adjust the size of the classroom where children with disabilities are placed 20. Funding and resource allocations for the school are periodically adjusted based on the performance of children, including children with disabilities 21. Educational administrators ensure that educational policies and financing arrangements take full account of individual differences and situations and 		

facilitate the development of inclusive schools

B. Curriculum and textbooks

1. The curriculum followed is based on the National Curriculum Framework adapted to align with academic expectations and meets the needs of all children in the school
2. The curriculum provides important links to higher education, vocational education, etc
3. The academic core curriculum is accessible to all students and is flexible and culturally and socially accommodating to reflect the diversity of students and of the local circumstances
4. There is an inclusive education model for the education of children with different disabilities
5. While drawing up the curriculum, the school maintains the balance between the recognition of individual needs and an acknowledgment of the necessity to develop a whole curriculum model
6. The school curriculum includes development of social skills as a component
7. The move towards greater inclusion drives the innovations/modification of curriculum design and implementation in the school according to individual needs of the children with disabilities
8. The students in the class receive meaningful & continuous feedback from teachers, special/ resource teachers, etc., on their performance to strengthen future performances
9. The school creates opportunities for sharing good models of students' performance and innovative teachers' interventions across classrooms.
10. The school has sufficient Braille/talking/ digital books, supplementary material and technology for effectively transacting the curriculum.
11. The school has materials that can be used by students who speak a variety of languages, provide alternatives that appear equivalent to avoid any kind of stigmatization or labeling
12. Materials in the school provide multiple means of representation, presentation and expression and are simple with clear instructions
13. The school uses the total communication approach for children with hearing impairments, which includes sign language, oral, auditory, written and visual aids, depending on the particular needs and abilities of the child.
14. The school gives training in Braille reading and writing and also provides Braille books if required.
15. The school has enriched classrooms on account of diversity in socio-cultural backgrounds
16. The school makes provision for assistive technology for providing access to the general curriculum
17. The teachers in the school collaborate together for designing the activities for all students in the school.
18. Performance scores based on the activities designed by the teachers are used to identify the gap in the curriculum and for other relevant purposes.

<p>C. Teachers & teaching</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The staff makes maximum use of their time to enhance students' learning 2. The school has specialist teachers to address special needs if required 3. The teaching materials in the school are culturally sensitive and locally relevant 4. The school involves local language speakers to help teachers to facilitate communication in the mother tongue, teaching of language and creating materials 5. The teachers have opportunities to engage with all children as the school believes in having flexible time table 6. The school empowers the teachers to take decisions especially when planning for children in vulnerable circumstances 7. The teachers in the school have the skills to teach all children in a single class who differ from each other in many ways 8. The teachers have evolved alternative goals and expectations for students keeping their diversity in mind 9. The teachers in the school are not overloaded with so much work that they are unable to give special attention to children who require it 10. The inclusive schools have adequate qualified and competent teachers to address the educational requirements of children with disabilities with focus on the pedagogy of teaching in classrooms. <p>D. Students with disabilities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The school educates and sensitizes the students on various kinds of discrimination prevalent in society 2. The school has the policy to encourage the students to support one another especially those in need 3. All students including children with disabilities are encouraged to take part in the school activities, sports, games, etc. 4. All children understand and comprehend the language of instruction in the school 5. The students know whom to contact if they experience problems and difficulties in the school 6. The school recognizes and responds to the diverse needs and behaviour of learners 7. The school creates opportunities for learners to participate in co-operative activities and ventures 8. Children are encouraged to make use of locally found materials as a resource for learning 9. The school arranges facilities to look after the health and social difficulties of students 10. Children with disabilities are encouraged to take decisions and do not stand out separately from others 11. The school encourages frequent contacts between students with and without disabilities <p>E. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The school is fully accessible to all children including children with 		
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<p>disabilities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The school doors have handles fixed at appropriate level and not too high 3. The school toilets have adequate doors taking care of privacy, especially for girls/children who need help in toileting 4. The blackboards are fixed at a proper height in the class to be accessible to all children, including those who want to come near the board to read it. 5. The classrooms have adequate daylight and extra light when necessary 6. The noise level in the classes is minimized for avoiding distraction 7. The school takes measures to provide adequate transport facilities to children with disabilities 8. Use of ICT and assistive devices to support the inclusion of all students in the classroom is encouraged 9. The school has a resource room or special room for additional teaching if required 10. The school is equipped with science labs and equipment for mathematical activities including the adapted versions 11. The school has adequate sport facilities for all children 12. There are facilities available to look after the health and social difficulties of students 13. Resource support in the form of teaching-learning/supplementary material in different languages is available in the school 14. Teaching of Braille, orientation and mobility skills and sign language is an important part of the school programme 15. Provisions for specialist staff like speech therapist, primary health worker, physiotherapist and special educator for meeting the special needs of children form an important part of the budget 16. The school provides facilities like ICT and other technological support along with training for both staff and students 17. The school makes provisions in the budget for removing architectural barriers and adapting the physical environment to improve accessibility of the school premises <p>F. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The local community views the school positively and happily sends the children to school 2. The school ensures that there is equal representation and participation of different communities in its activities 3. The school extends support to sensitize parents and communities about the importance of their involvement in the school activities 4. The school readily collaborates with NGOs and other relevant organizations for developing school vision and for resource support 5. The school has successfully created parent-teacher associations, and local level committees in order to make school environment supportive for all children 6. The school provides a platform for the formation of family support groups 7. The school mobilizes available community resources if there is a need 8. The school provides parents and families with necessary information in 		
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simple and clear language		
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Research question 3: For research question 3, the data as given in Table 3 shall be collected.

Table 3: In- service and pre-service teacher education for inclusive education of India and Germany

A.	In-service teacher education for inclusive education	India	Germany
1.	Content related to inclusive education for in-service teacher education		
i.	Objectives		
ii.	Duration		
iii.	Relevant		
iv.	Methodology		
2.	Periodic evaluation of in-service teacher training		
i.	Are the teachers implementing their training in schools?		
ii.	Is there periodic evaluation of implementation of taught in teachers		
iii.	Training? Are the teachers evaluated for their in-service training after few months 1 year?		
3.	Is there active involvement of teachers in designing an in-service training programme?		
4.	Is there a visit to a special school that can help teacher trainees change their views about the children with disabilities?		
5.	Does the experts providing training has experience of working with inclu schools who can clarify apprehensions about different disabilities?		
6.	Does the sustainability of the effectiveness of an in-service training programme measured through Refresher courses?		
7.	Are there members of core groups prepared to fulfill the shortfall of spec teachers and facilitate inclusion?		
B	Pre-service teacher education for inclusive education		
.	Content related to pre-service teacher education for inclusive education		
i.	Objectives		
ii.	Duration		
iii.	Relevant		
iv.	Methodology		

d. Research question 4:

For the research question 4, a review of related literature shall be done and the findings of the research by Indian and German authors shall be highlighted. Different variables to be reviewed shall be:

1. Differences in the attitudes amongst Indian and German teachers with regards to gender.

2. Differences in the attitudes amongst Indian and German teachers with regards to age.
3. Differences in the attitudes of Indian and German pre-service vs. in-service teachers.
4. Differences in the attitudes of Indian and German primary vs. secondary teachers.
5. Differences in the attitudes of Indian and German teachers with regards to years of teaching experience.
6. Differences in the attitudes of Indian and German teachers with regards to holding a postgraduate degree/diploma or not in Special education.
7. Differences in the attitudes of Indian and German teachers with regards to their inclusion related knowledge.
8. Differences in the attitudes of Indian and German teachers with regards to their level of inclusion-related training.
9. Differences in the attitudes of Indian and German teachers with regards to their inclusive education-related experiences.
10. Differences in the attitudes of Indian and German teachers with regards to their self-efficacy in managing behaviour.
11. Differences in the attitudes of Indian and German teachers with regards to their self-efficacy in collaboration.
12. Differences in the attitudes of Indian and German teachers with regards to their self-efficacy in using inclusive instruction.

F. STATISTICAL TOOLS

Mean, SD, Percentage, t-test, Pearson correlation, ANOVA

G. METHODOLOGY

The Analytical Method Approach shall be used to compare the Inclusive Education of India and Germany. This approach brings together the relationship that exists between the educational system of the countries and their social, political and economic conditions. Through this analysis, the understanding of the importance of each element can be done separately and independently. The analytical method is considered useful when educational organizations are compared.

Procedure:

1. **Collect Educational Data:** The researcher shall use secondary sources of data in the study that includes journals, published research papers, websites of Indian and German universities, resources of Indian and German administration e.g. Kultusministerkonferenz for Germany and Department of School Education and Literacy, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Department of Education, Government of India, National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA), National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Rehabilitation Council of India(RCI) for India.
2. **Interpretation of related data:** To understand similarities and differences found in the educational systems of India and Germany, the educational information obtained from different sources shall be analyzed and interpreted.
3. **Determining the standard for comparison:** To compare the educational systems fairly, certain standards shall be set to compare the similarities and differences of Indian and German systems of inclusion in education for the children with disabilities. Based on these standards that analysis and understanding of the similarities and differences of the educational systems of India and Germany shall be done.
4. **Interpretation and conclusion:** Interpretation and conclusions based on the comparison of the systems of inclusion in education of the children with disabilities of India and Germany shall be drawn.
5. **Summarization:** Summarization of successful strategies concerning inclusive education of both countries shall be discussed after their comparative study. Few examples are given here.
 - a. The initiatives by the Indian and German governments to accelerate the inclusion of education.
 - b. Successful strategies to remove different barriers to the inclusion of the children with disabilities.
 - c. Successful strategies to have adequate qualified and competent teachers to address the educational requirements of children with disabilities for both in-service and pre-service teacher education curricula/programs for both countries.
 - d. Successful strategies for pre-service teacher education curricula and in-service teacher training programs to be reviewed and revised as required.

- e. Successful strategies to develop partnerships with institutions of higher learning, governmental organizations, and NGOs to promote the participation of children with disabilities in all aspects of education.
- f. Successful strategies to increase enrolment of children with disabilities in inclusive schools.
- g. Successful strategies to enhance functioning of inclusive schools.

H. LIMITATIONS

There exist differences in India and Germany with respect to socio-economic condition, political environment, physical environment, geographical environment and legal environment which can make it difficult to set standards of comparison between the two countries.

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