

Inclusive Education in India and Russia: A Comparative Analysis of Legal Frameworks

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Abstract

This article addresses the question of the comparative analysis of legal frameworks in the inclusive education system of India and Russia. The objective is to consider the issue of inclusive education. Despite the differences in mentality, special conditions and features, India and Russia have the same problem in this sphere. The main problem of the system of inclusive education in India and Russia is the lack of specially trained teachers and detailed developed legal frameworks. India and Russia have no all-Indian and all-Russian law about inclusive education. There were no significant differences of legal frameworks of inclusive education in India and Russia. There are significant differences in special conditions of transition to inclusive education in India and Russia. The lack of necessary conditions in schools and the lack of government policies and finances are the main barriers to inclusive education.

Keywords

inclusive education, people with disabilities, Russia, India

Introduction

India and Russia are countries with inclusive educational problems. Inclusive education gathers all students together in one class and social group and gives the opportunity to maximize the potential of all disabled

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learners. The importance of inclusive education is especially relevant in the context of India and Russia. In comparison with western countries, the systems of inclusive education in India and Russia are not properly developed. Most of the adults and children with disabilities do not have equal access to education in both India and Russia. In accordance with the new Russian law 'About Education' which came into force on 1 September 2013, disabled education was announced as one of the priorities of the educational policy. But, to what extent is the society ready for this innovation? Despite the validity of this law, privileges for disabled people who entered universities have been significantly reduced (Pavenkov et al., 2015; Rubtcova et al., 2015). The main cause of this was the public disaffection because priority was given to the disabled over healthy people in this relation.

Nine per cent of the population in Russia has some form of disability. This is 13 million people with special mental, intellectual or physical development needs, of varying degrees. (Kalabekov, 2010). These people should live in specially adapted conditions which often require considerable support in education.

In India the same situation obtains. India is a country with similar educational problems. In 2005, 2.2 per cent of the Indian population or 21,906,769 was disabled, but NGOs think that the figure would be closer to six per cent or 70 million (Thomas, 2005). Most of the adults and children with disabilities do not have access to education. Even if they have finished higher education, nobody helps these children to enter the mainstream community thereafter. In accordance with the Indian law of the Disabilities Act, which came into force in 1995, persons with disabilities have equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation in the educational process. The Disabilities Act is a signal achievement for the system of Indian inclusive education. The preamble to the Disabilities Act clearly outlines its objective of promoting and ensuring equality and full participation of persons with disabilities. The Disability Act aims to protect and promote the economic and social rights of people with disabilities. (Mohitand Rungta, 2004). In India there is an increased number of special schools, which indicates that disabled children are capable of being integrated or included and could be admitted to mainstream schools (Bagga, 2010).

The development of the system of inclusive education in India and Russia from 1990

All phenomena have historical aspects. It is thus necessary to analyze the historical aspect of the development of inclusive education in India and Russia. A comparative study of the modern development of legal frameworks of the system of inclusive education in India and Russia is required. The system of education of persons with disabilities was created in the USSR in 1920. This system considers the disabilities of children as defects and children with disabilities have to be isolated from society. This exclusive ideology was dominant in the USSR. The system of social education in the USSR (1922-1926) is shown in Figure 1.

This system existed with some changes until the 1990s, when the USSR was destroyed. There are three stages of modern development of the system of inclusive education in India and Russia since 1990.

Figure 1: The system of social education in the USSR (1922-1926)

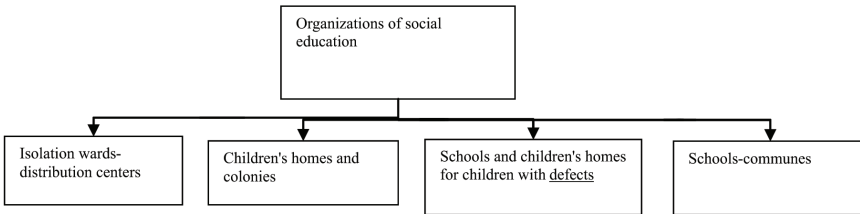


Table 1: Development of the system of inclusive education in India and Russia, since 1990

| | <i>India</i> | <i>USSR/ Russia</i> |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1. The beginning of 1990 | 1992. Programme of Action (POA). The main achievement of this document is the idea that children with special needs must not study in a special school. A child with a disability who can be educated in the general school should not be in the special school (Hegarty | 1990. Law about education. On the basic principles of social protection of disabled people in the USSR. This law consists of the whole system of rules that forms an institution of education and training of persons with disabilities. |

and Mithu, 2002).

1992. Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) Act. An Act to provide for the constitution of the Rehabilitation Council of India for regulating the training of rehabilitation professionals and the maintenance of a Central Rehabilitation Register and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

1992. The law about education (Government of Russia, 2012).

The state provides the right to all citizens for education by creating a system of education.

1993. The Constitution of Russian Federation. 1. Everyone shall have the right to education. 2. Guarantees shall be provided for general access to and free pre-school, secondary and high vocational education in state or municipal educational establishments and at enterprises (Government of Russia, 1993) The guarantee of educational right of person.

2. 1995-2005

1995. The Persons with Disabilities Act (PWD Act). The main principles of this act are equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation. The number of special schools should be increased to 3,000 by 2000. There were only 9,492 specially trained teachers. Of these 4,295 were trained to teach students with mental retardation, 1,079 were trained to teach students with visual disabilities, 4,011 were trained to teach students with hearing impairments, and

1995-1996. The decision of the Ministry of Education of Russia to include the curricula of pedagogical universities from 1 September 1996 courses such as the introduction in special (correctional) pedagogy and features the psychology of children with disabilities.

107 were trained to teach students with locomotor disabilities in India (Sharma and Deppeler, 2005).

A government study in 2004 revealed that only 0.51% of disabled students are in mainstream educational institutions at the school level (UNICEF India, the United Nations, 2012).

2005. The Ministry of Human Resource Development also drafted the Action Plan for Inclusion in Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities (IECYD) (Kalyanpur, 2008).

3. 2005-2014

2009. Inclusive Education of the Disabled at the Secondary Stage (IEDSS). The objective of IEDSS is to enable the disabled children who have completed eight years of elementary education to continue their education at the secondary stage in an inclusive environment in regular schools (Government on India, 2009)

2009-2010. The Right to Education Act. This act put into effect in 2010.

2009. State educational standard—every school should create and execute the programme of inclusive education (correction work).

2012. Moscow law. About education of persons with disabilities (special education).

The first school of inclusive education Ark appeared in Russia, in Moscow in 1991. Since the autumn of 1992, Russia launched the project of the integration of persons with disabilities, resulting in the creation of 11 regions on site experimental education for disabled children. In 1995 the Ministry of Education of Russia made the decision to introduce into the curricula of pedagogical universities from 1 September 1996 courses such as “introduction in special (correctional) pedagogy” and “features psychology of children with disabilities.” In 2009, the new educational standard was admitted. According to this standard, every school should create and execute the programme of inclusive education (correction work). The programme of inclusive education should be directed to the correction of deficiencies in the physical and (or) mental development of children with disabilities and to support special children in studying and understanding the basic educational programme of primary education (Ministry of Education, 2011).

The Moscow law about education of persons with disabilities (special education) was put into full force in 2012. This law was an important step towards the development of inclusive education in Russia. It established three main ideas:

- First, the right of the person for early remedial help is ensured by this law.
- Second, the right of parents to choose the educational institution for the disabled child. Today there is a violation of human rights in this area. Schools refuse to accept these children, although the current law suggests the opposite.
- Third, the rights of children with disabilities to have technical means and receive distance education. These rights are clearly spelled out in the law.

The same ideas were enshrined in the Right of Education Bill which was adopted in 2009 in India by the Government of India and put into force in 2010. The right of the child to free and compulsory education became one of the most fundamental rights in India. From this time, the main principle of education in India as well as in Russia is free education. Free education means and includes providing elementary education to all children with no direct costs like fees/capitation fees,

or indirect costs like kind/services/fees for stationery, to be borne by the parents of the child. (Government of Andhra Pradesh, 2010).

The problems of modern system of inclusive education in Russia

In the context of the social and economic changes in the Russian Federation, the system of inclusive education has changed. However, at the same time this system reproduces Soviet stereotypes and educational standards. The latent purpose of inclusive education is to give education to people who are able to survive on an everyday basis. Educational perspectives are limited. However, the politics of special education for children with disabilities marginalise children and limit their social orientations and perspectives. The system of inclusive education in Russia has a number of problems:

1. Lack of educated teachers
2. Financial problems
3. The moral motivation of teachers to support students with disabilities is very weak. Such a problem is caused by the value orientation of modern teachers, who focus on talented children and reject some special children.

From another point of view, the main problem is the inaccessibility for children with disabilities to higher education and as a result inaccessibility to get normal or highly paid work places. Persons with disabilities cannot enter the universities after finishing special correctional schools or boarding schools for children with ICP (Elevated intracranial pressure). Such persons are directed to professional rehabilitation schools, but diplomas from such lyceums are not admitted by employers. As a result, they cannot get a normal job. Only children from fragile Xsyndrome-classes can continue education in a university by passing USE-exam (United state exam) and they can get a job. This is the main problem of the modern system of inclusive education in Russia.

The same problem is found in the system of education in India. The system of inclusive education is part of the general system of education in India, which is shown in Figure 2. Inclusive education in India exists only at the following level of education:

- Primary special schools (6-11 years)
- Secondary and higher secondary special schools (11-15 years)

In India, special schools are private schools often located in urban areas. They date back to the 1800s (Byrd, 2010). The first special schools were founded by Catholic missionaries. The mission through education as well as social mission always was the main method of Christian mission in India. Now most of the special schools are founded by the Government of India. According to the study of Rao and Reddy (2004), various services are available in these centers, as shown on Table 2.

Table 2: Services available at special schools in India

| <i>Facilities/services</i> | <i>% special schools</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Residential | 26 |
| Prevocational + vocational training | 60 |
| Home based | 32 |
| Early intervention | 31 |
| Sheltered workshops | 13 |
| Integrated services | 17 |
| Intellectual disabilities only | 57 |
| Multiple disabilities | 23 |

Source: Rao and Reddy, 2004.

The number of special schools in India is extremely small (approximately 2500). Such schools cannot provide for all children and students with disabilities. Only 46% of children with disabilities attend schools, as shown Table 3.

Table 3: Condition and statistics of inclusive education in India

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Estimated number of children attending school | 192 million |
| Disabled population (including adults) | 21.9 million (2001 census) |
| Literacy Rate | 65.38% (45% for disabled) |
| Disabled Children | 12 million |

| | |
|---|---|
| Children with Disabilities Attending School | 46% |
| Special Education Law | Persons with Disabilities Act of 1995 |
| Other important legislation | Rehabilitation of India Act of 1992: National Trust for Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act of 1999. |
| Types of Education Provided | Integrated and Special Schools |
| Name of Major Categories | Blindness, low-vision, leprosy-cured, hearing impairment, mental illness, loco-motor disability, intellectual disability |
| Number of Teacher Education Programmes for Special Education | 37 |

The main problem of the development of the modern system of inclusive education in India is that the majority of people in the country are poor. A lot of disabled children live in very poor families. In countries like India, the social problem of poverty causes disability. Harriss-White (1996) noticed that this problem of poverty creates barriers to the participation of disabled children in the normal routines, especially regular school study.

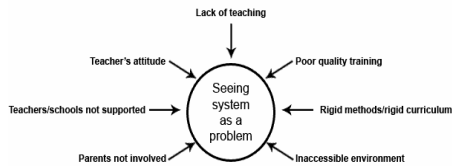
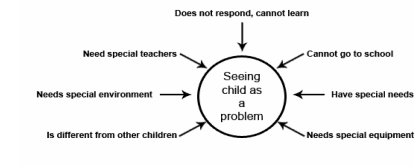
Special conditions and features of transition to inclusive education in India and Russia

It is important to stress the difference between the systems of inclusive education in India and Russia. From one point of view, this difference is caused by the special conditions and features of transition to inclusive education in these countries. India is a post-colonial country. The Indian system of education is under the powerful influence of the USA and the UK. The right of all students to be educated in mainstream schools has been strengthened further by specific legislation in the United States and Great Britain. In the US, legislation such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has influenced significant progress for inclusive education (Duke, 2009). This Act was admitted in 1975. The Special Education Needs and Disability Act was put into effect in the UK in 2001. The

right of education bill, which was admitted in 2009 year by the Government of India, is continuation of this process.

The transition to inclusive education in Russia occurs in the situation of democratic norms, their first legislative design and deep economic crisis. Inclusive education is needed for the humane treatment of people with disabilities and recognising the fullness of their rights. Transition to inclusive education in Russia occurs in an atmosphere of permanent national conflicts (for instance, the situation in the Ukraine, 2014-2015). Inclusive education in Russia is faced with financial problems. The Russian tradition of charity was interrupted in 1917, and currently there is a very weak social movement. Supporting people with disabilities is not stimulated by sufficient financial subsidies. There was an unwritten taboo on discussing disability issues in the media sphere, but currently there are some changes in the Russian public consciousness.

Table 4: Special conditions and features of transition to inclusive education in India and Russia

| Inclusive education in India | Inclusive education in Russia |
|---|--|
| System as a problem | «Child as a problem» (Rao, 2003) |
|  |  |

The disadvantages of the system of education are considered as the problem for inclusive education. The main trend of development is transition of inclusive education from special schools to integrated education

Inclusive education in Russia considers the special child as a problem for the social system. Unfortunately, such an approach was saved from Soviet-Union epoch.

The main trend of development is transition of inclusive education from correction of person with disability to inclusive education and adaptation.

Conclusion

In this paper we have analysed the comparative research of inclusive education in India and Russia. The common problems of the system of inclusive education in India and Russia are that the majority of people are poor, there is a lack of specially trained teachers and a helpful legal framework. India and Russia do not have all-Russian and all-Indian laws on inclusive education.

One of the most important findings of this study is the different consideration of the object of these problems. If Russian educational and government organisations consider the disabled child as a problem, Indians consider the system of inclusive education as the main problem. One of the aspects of the system is the quantity of specially trained teachers, which is small in India.

‘Inclusive growth’ is a priority for reform in Indian education. With the growth in the middle classes, Indian universities must prepare themselves for considerable changes in their student profiles.

These different views influence the specifics of transition of inclusive education in India and Russia. Rulers understand these problems and the situation is changing for the better. In 2009, the Russian president Dmitry Anatolyevich Medvedev said: “We need to create a normal system of education for children and young people with disabilities to learn among peers, including in ordinary secondary schools. This is necessary not only for them, but for all society” (Kyzmin, 2009).

India’s 12th Five Year Plan offers a new perspective of development of the system of inclusive education. To counter education discrimination against people with disabilities, the Plan has to adopt the strategy of service delivery. “In the area of service delivery the challenges to be addressed include...improving participation and completion rates of students with disabilities at various stages of education (elementary, secondary and tertiary). Emphasis on the 12th Plan will be on educational development through: (i) Pre-Matric Scholarships for students with disabilities; (ii) Post-Matric Scholarships for students with disabilities; (iii) free coaching for students with disabilities; (iv) Special/ Residential school for students with severe and multiple disabilities, in districts not having Government special

schools; (v) Hostels for existing Government special schools not having hostels and augmentation of seats in existing hostels of Government special schools; (vi) Support for establishment/modernisation/capacity augmentation of Braille Presses; (vii) Scholarships for ‘Top Class’ education for students with disabilities studying in premier higher education institutes (like IITs, NITs and so on); (viii) Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for persons with disabilities; (ix) National Overseas Scholarship for persons with disabilities; (x) establishment of a college for deaf in each of the five regions of the country and (xi) establishment of a National Accessible Library.” (Government of India, 2012/2017).

Thus, despite the differences in the special conditions and features, India and Russia have to solve the same problems in this matter and the two countries demonstrate similarities in the organisation of inclusive education.

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