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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF THE JOMTIEN AND SALAMANCA DECLARATIONS ON NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICIES

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a comparative analysis of the Salamanca Declaration (1994) and the Jomtien Declaration (1990), focusing on their respective influences on national education policies in five countries: In as much as the two indicators are concerned, the country that scored high was the European country, Canada and was followed by Spain, India, South Africa and Brazil. Policies towards the education of the disabled children have been advanced in the developed world also due to the Salamanca Declaration. On the other hand, the developing countries like India, Brazil and China still facing the same issues which are funding, infrastructure and lack of training for the teachers. Similarly, as the Jomtien Declaration which demand for enactment of primary education for all has made an influence in education all over the world. Some among them is the India's: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Brazil's Bolsa Familia, for which there has been expansion of enrolment and retention of school going children. However, one of the crucial areas of concern is the equity in the provision of quality education for all since an aspect that influences the implementation of improvement significantly is still problematic in that developed countries are highly affected with the majority of the developing countries being worst affected. These results point more seriously to long-term sustenance and commitment coupled with international cooperation and use of appropriate policies to eliminate such enduring problems. Thus, the following actions are needed to complete this SOC for socio-economic integration and enhance teachers' quality to meet the visions of the equitable and quality BEC for every child, regardless their social classes or learners' needs.

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INTRODUCTION

Inclusive Education, Universal Education, Salamanca Declaration, Jomtien Declaration. The Jomtien Declaration was made during the 1990 conference EFA in Jomtien, Thailand, aimed to address the difficulties faced by education globally by main aspiring a basic education for all and promotion of literacy (World Bank 1990). And it committed its partners to work together to ensure that all children, especially those in developing and disadvantaged contexts, can learn and be taught effectively. This historical speck became the foundation for other worldwide educational goals setting processes, including Millennium Development Goals as well as the Sustainable Development Goals. On the other hand, the Principles and Priorities for Education beyond 2015 Salamanca, Declaration in 1994 and The Jomtien Declaration in 1990 form the basic foundation that has greatly influenced articulated education policies and particularly those that support and ensure education equality and inclusiveness. The Salamanca Declaration, developed at the UNESCO World Conference on Special Needs Education held in Salamanca, Spain in 1994 addresses the need for integration stressing that schools for all children who might require special education should be established

(UNESCO, 1994). This declaration has made a permanent impact on national education policies for countries such as Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil and Canada. The Jomtien and Salamanca Declarations have marked the educational systems of tens of countries as influential and their effects have been marked depending on differences in socio-economic conditions, political leadership, and cultural bends of each country. This study undertakes a comparative analysis of how these two landmark declarations have shaped national education policies in five countries: Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil and Canada. As this study compares the strategies these nations have employed in order to adopt inclusive education system, it evaluates the opportunities and difficulties of such practices for enhancing the progress of inclusive education on international level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Salamanca Declaration and Inclusive Education: The Salamanca Declaration of 1994 marked a pivotal moment in the advancement of inclusive education, affirming the inherent right of every child to access education, irrespective of physical, mental, or socio-economic barriers (UNESCO, 1994). It called for the

integration of children with special educational needs into mainstream schooling systems, urging schools to adapt and cater to the diverse requirements of these students. In response, numerous nations undertook reforms to their national education policies, aligning them with the principles set forth in the Salamanca Declaration, which championed inclusive, child-centered education for all. Spain, for instance, took a proactive stance by incorporating inclusive education into its national legislation and policies, ensuring that students with special needs were integrated into mainstream schools. Research shows that in Spain, the Salamanca Declaration led to the creation of specialized support systems within regular schools, as well as a focus on training teachers in inclusive practices (Arnaiz, 2003). In Canada, the Salamanca Declaration has similarly influenced policies that promote inclusive education in all provinces. Canada's inclusive education policies emphasize early intervention, individualized support, and teacher training, leading to positive outcomes for students with disabilities (UNESCO, 2009). In contrast, developing countries like India and Brazil have faced challenges in fully implementing the Salamanca principles. India's Right to Education Act (2009) reflects the Salamanca Declaration's call for inclusion, but inadequate resources, lack of trained teachers, and poor infrastructure have impeded effective implementation (Singal, 2008). Brazil has adopted inclusive education policies that focus on integrating children with disabilities into mainstream schools, but challenges related to funding and teacher training remain (World Bank, 2011).

Ainscow (1999) - "Understanding the Development of Inclusive Education.": Ainscow (1999) analyzed the implementation of inclusive education policies in light of the Salamanca Declaration. He highlighted how the Declaration catalyzed a shift in global educational frameworks toward promoting inclusion for all learners, particularly those with special needs. The researcher also emphasized the challenges faced by schools in reorienting their practices and policies to accommodate students with diverse learning needs. Ainscow's study contributed to understanding the systemic changes required in educational institutions to foster inclusivity.

Booth (2000) - "Progress in Inclusive Education.": Booth (2000) explored the progress made since the Salamanca Declaration and how various educational systems adapted to its principles. His research revealed that while the Declaration provided an idealistic vision of inclusion, the practical application faced several hurdles, including insufficient teacher training and lack of resources. Booth's findings suggested that although many countries embraced the policy changes advocated by the Salamanca Declaration, the implementation lagged due to infrastructural and attitudinal barriers.

Jomtien Declaration and Universal Primary Education: The Jomtien Declaration (1990) set ambitious goals for achieving universal primary education by the year 2000, with a focus on improving literacy rates and expanding educational access for disadvantaged populations (World Bank, 1990). This declaration sparked global educational reform efforts, influencing national policies and programs aimed at increasing enrollment rates and improving the quality of education. India's *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (Education for All) program, launched in 2001, was a direct response to the goals of the Jomtien Declaration. The program sought to provide universal access to education, particularly for girls, children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and children in rural areas (Govinda & Bandyopadhyay, 2008). Similarly, Brazil's *Bolsa Familia* program, which provides financial assistance to low-income families in exchange for school attendance, has contributed to significant improvements in enrollment and retention rates (World Bank, 2015). Despite these successes, many developing countries continue to face challenges in achieving the goals of the Jomtien Declaration. Inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, and socio-economic disparities have limited the effectiveness of educational reforms in countries like India and Brazil. The World Bank (2020) emphasizes that while significant progress has been made in expanding access to education, persistent disparities remain, particularly in terms of quality and equity.

Smith (1995) - "Global Initiatives for Education: A Critical Review.": Smith examined the impact of the Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (EFA) goals. He analyzed how the declaration, introduced during the World Conference on Education for All in 1990, shaped global educational policies, particularly regarding Universal Primary Education (UPE). Smith found that the declaration provided a strong foundation for international cooperation in education, leading to the mobilization of resources and partnerships. However, he also noted that while the declaration significantly raised awareness of the importance of primary education, the implementation in low-income countries was slower than anticipated due to insufficient funding and logistical challenges. Smith's review concluded that despite these challenges, the Jomtien Declaration had a profound influence on prioritizing education in the global development agenda.

Johnson (2003) - "Educational Policies and Global Commitments: An Analysis of the Jomtien Declaration.": Johnson evaluated the progress toward Universal Primary Education (UPE) in the decade following the 1990 Jomtien Conference. Johnson's analysis indicated that the declaration set an ambitious goal of achieving universal access to primary education by 2000. He argued that while significant strides were made in improving enrollment rates, many developing countries still faced barriers such as poverty, gender inequality, and conflict, which hindered progress toward full UPE. Johnson's findings emphasized that the political commitment generated by the Jomtien Declaration was crucial, but it needed to be matched by sustainable financial and institutional support. His study called for more focused efforts on improving the quality of education alongside increasing access.

Research Gap: While there is extensive research on the influence of the Salamanca and Jomtien Declarations on global education policies, comparative studies that examine the specific strategies employed by different countries to implement these frameworks are limited. Existing studies often focus on individual countries or regions, without providing a broader comparative perspective that highlights the similarities and differences in policy implementation across developed and developing nations. Furthermore, there is a need for more research on the long-term outcomes and sustainability of inclusive education policies, particularly in developing countries where resources are limited. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a comparative analysis of the impact of the Salamanca and Jomtien Declarations on national education policies in Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil, and Canada. This table summarizes key studies and their findings related to the Salamanca Declaration on inclusive education and the Jomtien Declaration on universal primary education. It highlights the impact, progress, and challenges in implementing these declarations across various countries and contexts.

Significance of the Study: The significance of this study lies in its comparative analysis of the Salamanca and Jomtien Declarations and their impact on inclusive education policies across five diverse countries—Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil, and Canada. By examining these two influential international frameworks, the study sheds light on how different countries have interpreted and adapted the principles of inclusive and universal education to meet their socio-economic and cultural contexts. This comparison highlights both the successes and challenges in policy implementation, illustrating that while many nations have made legislative progress, persistent obstacles such as funding gaps, inadequate infrastructure, insufficient teacher training, and socio-cultural stigmas continue to hinder the full realization of inclusive education goals. The Salamanca Declaration, which emphasizes integrating children with special needs into mainstream schools, and the Jomtien Declaration, which advocates for Education for All (EFA), have both played critical roles in shaping national education systems. However, this study emphasizes that the journey toward achieving truly inclusive education is far from complete.

Table 1. Summary of Literature Review

Declaration	Author (Year)	Title/Focus	Main Findings
Salamanca	Ainscow (1999)	Understanding the Development of Inclusive Education	Shift in educational frameworks towards inclusion for all, challenges in reorienting practices.
Salamanca	Booth (2000)	Progress in Inclusive Education	Idealistic vision faced hurdles like insufficient resources and teacher training.
Salamanca	Arnaiz (2003)	Implementation of inclusive practices in Spain	Specialized support systems and teacher training in Spain resulted from the Declaration.
Salamanca	UNESCO (2009)	Impact of Salamanca on Canadian inclusive policies	Policies emphasize early intervention and individualized support for positive outcomes.
Salamanca	Singal (2008)	Challenges in implementing Right to Education in India	Resource inadequacies hinder effective implementation of inclusion.
Salamanca	World Bank (2011)	Barriers to inclusive education in Brazil	Challenges of funding and teacher training remain despite inclusive policies.
Jomtien	Smith (1995)	Global Initiatives for Education: A Critical Review	The declaration raised awareness but implementation slowed by funding challenges.
Jomtien	Johnson (2003)	Educational Policies and Global Commitments	Political commitment essential but needed sustainable support for UPE.
Jomtien	World Bank (1990)	Jomtien Declaration Goals and Educational Reform	Set ambitious goals for universal primary education influencing global reforms.
Jomtien	Govinda & Bandyopadhyay (2008)	India's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Response to Jomtien	Focused on universal access to education for marginalized groups.
Jomtien	World Bank (2015)	Impact of Bolsa Familia on Enrollment in Brazil	Financial assistance significantly improved enrollment and retention rates.
Jomtien	World Bank (2020)	Challenges in Achieving Universal Education Goals	Persistent disparities in quality and equity despite access improvements.

In countries like Spain and Canada, where substantial progress has been made, the study underscores the importance of sustained financial investment and well-trained educators in fostering inclusive educational environments. Spain's high percentage of children with disabilities in mainstream schools and Canada's success in integrating inclusive policies at the provincial level demonstrate the positive outcomes that can be achieved with strong governmental commitment. However, both countries also face challenges such as regional disparities and funding shortages that require ongoing attention. In contrast, developing nations like India, Brazil, and South Africa continue to grapple with deep-rooted socio-economic inequalities and infrastructural deficits, which disproportionately affect rural and marginalized communities. Despite these challenges, the study finds that these countries have made legislative strides in aligning with international goals, yet they require greater international cooperation, resources, and innovative strategies to close the gaps in policy implementation. This study also highlights the significance of addressing socio-cultural stigmas surrounding disability, which remain a major barrier to the integration of children with disabilities into mainstream education, particularly in countries like India and South Africa. The findings point to the need for community-based initiatives that challenge traditional perceptions of disability and promote inclusive values at both the societal and educational levels. Furthermore, by focusing on teacher training, which remains a significant challenge in all five countries, the study underscores the critical role that educators play in delivering inclusive education. The lack of adequately trained teachers in inclusive practices remains one of the most significant barriers to achieving the goals set out by the Salamanca Declaration. Overall, the significance of this study lies in its contribution to the global discourse on inclusive education by providing a comprehensive analysis of how different countries have responded to international frameworks like the Salamanca and Jomtien Declarations. It offers valuable insights into the factors that enable or hinder inclusive education, highlighting the need for continued investment, policy innovation, and societal change to ensure that all children, regardless of their abilities, have access to quality education. Through this comparative analysis, the study calls for global cooperation and localized interventions to overcome the persistent challenges of inclusivity in education systems worldwide.

Objectives of the study: This study aims to explore the influence of the Salamanca and Jomtien Declarations on the development and implementation of inclusive and universal education policies in five distinct countries. By examining the adaptation of these frameworks, the study seeks to understand how these nations address educational inclusion within their socio-economic contexts.

- To analyze the impact of the Salamanca and Jomtien Declarations on the development and implementation of inclusive and universal education policies in five diverse countries—Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil, and Canada—focusing on their interpretation and adaptation of these international frameworks within their unique socio-economic contexts.
- To compare the strategies employed by these countries in translating the principles of inclusive and universal education into actionable policies, identifying key factors that have contributed to successful implementation or led to challenges in achieving inclusive education.
- To evaluate the outcomes of inclusive and universal education policies in these countries, highlighting the achievements, gaps, and disparities in access to education, particularly for marginalized groups such as children with disabilities, girls, and socio-economically disadvantaged students.
- To provide recommendations for policymakers, educators, and international organizations on improving inclusive and equitable education globally, offering insights into effective policy interventions and strategies that can address the persistent challenges in delivering quality education for all.

The study highlights both the successes and challenges in implementing inclusive education policies, with notable disparities in access for marginalized groups. The findings offer valuable recommendations for enhancing global efforts towards inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research methodology was adopted for this study, utilizing case studies and comparative analysis to examine the influence of the Salamanca and Jomtien Declarations on national education policies. Data were collected from academic journals, government reports, policy documents, and interviews with education experts. A literature review was conducted to identify existing research on the Salamanca and Jomtien Declarations, and case studies of five countries were analyzed to compare their experiences with implementing inclusive education policies.

DISCUSSION

Global Impact of the Jomtien Declaration: The Jomtien Declaration has had a broader impact on global education reforms, particularly in

terms of expanding access to primary education. India's *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* program, launched in response to the Jomtien Declaration, has significantly increased school enrolment rates, particularly for disadvantaged children (Govinda & Bandyopadhyay, 2008). Brazil's *Bolsa Familia* program has also contributed to improvements in educational access, with enrolment rates increasing among low-income families (World Bank, 2015).

- South Asia (91.1%) and Middle East & North Africa (93.4%) perform above the global average, but still face challenges related to quality and retention.
- East Asia & Pacific (97.4%) and Latin America & Caribbean (95.1%) show higher enrolment rates, reflecting effective educational reforms and policies that promote access to primary education.

Table 2. Methodology Overview

Sl No.	Methodology Component	Description
1	Research Design	Qualitative, comparative analysis with case studies
2	Data Sources	Academic journals, government reports, policy documents
3	Countries Studied	Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil, Canada
4	Analytical Approach	Comparative framework

Table 3. Analysis of Jomtien National Education Policy

Country	Jomtien Declaration Influence	Key Challenges
Spain	Strong policies for universal education	Teacher training gaps
India	Major educational reforms like SSA	Infrastructure and funding gaps
South Africa	Focus on addressing historical inequalities	Teacher shortages, socio-economic disparities
Brazil	<i>Bolsa Familia</i> program has increased access to education	Funding and quality of education issues
Canada	Universal education widely implemented	Need for continuous adaptation and innovation

Table 4. Impact of Jomtien Declaration on National Education Policies and Outcomes

Country	Jomtien Declaration Influence	Key Challenges	Statistical Data
Spain	Strong policies for universal education	Teacher training gaps	- 25% of students have a scientific-technological Baccalaureate - Teacher participation in continuous professional development is 91.8%, below EU-23 average (94.3%) - Employment rate of recent graduates (79.7%) is close to EU average (82.5%)
India	Major educational reforms like SSA	Infrastructure and funding gaps	- Right to Education Act (2009) strengthened commitment to universal primary education - Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan program (2001) improved primary school enrollment rates, particularly among marginalized populations
South Africa	Focus on addressing historical inequalities	Teacher shortages, socio-economic disparities	- In North-West Province, over 78% of recently resigned teachers cited low salary and benefits as reason for departure
Brazil	<i>Bolsa Familia</i> program has increased access to education	Funding and quality of education issues	- Bolsa Familia provided financial aid to poor families, conditional on children attending school and getting vaccinated - Program contributed to 27.7% reduction in poverty during first term of President Lula's administration - In 2006, about 11 million Brazilian families received funds from Bolsa Familia
Canada	Universal education widely implemented	Need for continuous adaptation and innovation	- As of 2021, 33% of Canadians held a bachelor's degree or higher, up from 23% in 2006 - Canada's total expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP (6.6%) is higher than OECD average (5.1%) - In 2019/2020, 84% of young people in Canada graduated high school on time, up from 81% in 2018/2019

However, despite these successes, challenges remain in achieving the goals of the Jomtien Declaration. Inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, and socio-economic disparities continue to impede progress, particularly in developing countries (World Bank, 2020). This table summarizes the influence of the Jomtien Declaration on national education policies, key challenges faced, and relevant statistical data for Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil, and Canada. The data highlights the progress made in implementing universal education policies, as well as the ongoing challenges each country faces in achieving full educational access and quality.

Global Enrolment and Literacy Rates (2020): The graph provides a clear overview of the Global Enrolment and Literacy Rates in 2020 across various regions: Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, East Asia & Pacific, Latin America & Caribbean, and Middle East & North Africa. The data includes key educational indicators such as primary and secondary school net enrolment rates, adult and youth literacy rates, and gender parity indices for primary and secondary education.

Primary School Net Enrolment Rate: The global average for primary school net enrolment is 89.6%. However, this rate varies significantly across regions:

- Sub-Saharan Africa lags behind at 78.2%, highlighting the ongoing challenges of access to primary education, especially in rural and underserved areas.

Secondary School Net Enrolment Rate: The global secondary school net enrolment rate is 76.4%, reflecting lower participation compared to primary education:

- Sub-Saharan Africa (43.2%) has the lowest secondary enrolment rate, indicating significant barriers in progressing from primary to secondary education.
- South Asia (67.1%) and Middle East & North Africa (72.9%) are closer to the global average, but still face disparities, particularly for girls and rural populations.
- East Asia & Pacific (87.3%) and Latin America & Caribbean (81.7%) continue to lead in secondary school enrolment, benefiting from education-focused policies that ensure retention beyond primary education.

Adult Literacy Rate: The global adult literacy rate in 2020 stood at 86.5%, but large disparities exist:

- Sub-Saharan Africa (65.3%) has the lowest adult literacy rate, with many adults, especially women, lacking access to basic education.
- South Asia (74.4%) has made significant strides but still faces challenges, particularly in reaching remote areas and marginalized groups.

- East Asia & Pacific (96.3%) and Latin America & Caribbean (94.7%) have high literacy rates, demonstrating the success of lifelong learning programs.
- Middle East & North Africa (81.6%) shows moderate progress, though gender disparities and socio-political challenges affect adult literacy in some countries.

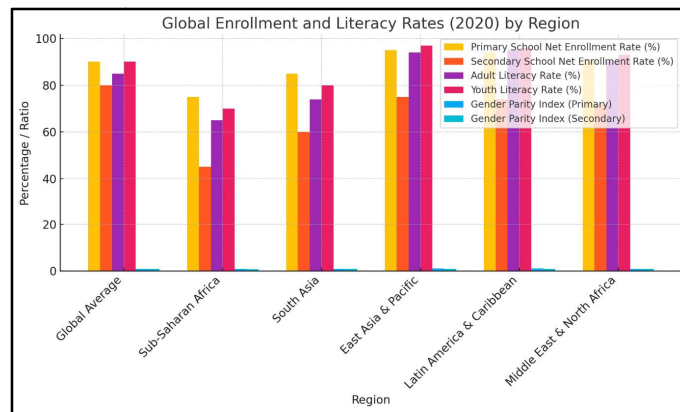
Youth Literacy Rate: The global youth literacy rate is relatively high at 91.7%, reflecting progress in educational access for younger populations:

- Sub-Saharan Africa (75.2%) has lower youth literacy, which is tied to broader challenges in the education system, including high dropout rates and limited access to secondary education.
- South Asia (87.1%) has seen improvements, especially through programs focused on female education and rural outreach.
- East Asia & Pacific (98.1%) and Latin America & Caribbean (97.2%) showcase very high youth literacy rates, reflecting successful policies in universal education.
- Middle East & North Africa (89.3%) shows progress, but cultural and economic barriers still affect certain groups.

- East Asia & Pacific (0.99) and Latin America & Caribbean (0.98) show near-perfect gender parity in primary education, largely due to targeted policies promoting girls' education.
- Middle East and North Africa (0.91) promoting Gender Parity Index

India: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2014–2020): The period from 2014 to 2020 witnessed steady progress in several key educational indicators under the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) and related education reforms in India:

1. **Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)** improved from 96.9% in 2014-2015 to 97.8% in 2019-2020, indicating increased access to education, particularly for marginalized children in rural areas. This growth reflects the success of policies aimed at universalizing elementary education.
2. **Dropout Rate (Primary)** decreased significantly from 4.13% in 2015 to 3.2% in 2020. The decline can be attributed to enhanced school infrastructure, mid-day meal schemes, and targeted initiatives to retain students, particularly from disadvantaged communities.



Source: <http://data.uis.unesco.org/>
<https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators>

Graphical Representation 1. Global Enrolment Literacy Rate (2020)

India: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

Table 5. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2014–Present)

Sl No.	Indicator	Year	Value	Notes
1	Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)	2014-2023	96.9% (2014-2015); 97.8% (2019-2020)	Steady improvements in GER, with higher inclusion rates of marginalized children, especially in rural areas.
2	Dropout Rate (Primary)	2014-2023	4.13% (2015); 3.2% (2020)	Significant decline in dropout rates due to improved school infrastructure and mid-day meal programs.
3	Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR)	2015-2020	24:1 (2015); 26:1 (2020)	PTR slightly increased; SSA hired additional teachers to meet the growing enrollment, but challenges persist.
4	Gender Parity Index (GPI)	2014-2020	0.94 (2015); 1.0 (2020)	GPI improved, reflecting equal gender participation, driven by initiatives like <i>Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya</i> .
5	Infrastructure Development (Schools)	2014-2020	91% (2015); 94% (2020)	Infrastructure projects such as toilets and drinking water facilities helped improve the learning environment.
6	Number of Schools Constructed	2014-2020	350,000+ (2015); 360,000+ (2020)	SSA has constructed thousands of schools, focusing on underserved rural areas and urban slums.
7	Teacher Training (Number of Teachers)	2015-2020	3.5 million trained (2015); 4 million (2020)	Regular teacher training and development programs under SSA and RTE helped improve education quality.

Source: MHRD's official website

Gender Parity Index (Primary and Secondary): The Gender Parity Index for primary education is close to parity globally at 0.98:

- Sub-Saharan Africa (0.93) lags behind, indicating that girls in many areas are still less likely to attend primary school compared to boys.
- South Asia (0.96) and Middle East & North Africa (0.97) have made progress, but challenges remain in achieving full gender equality.

3. **Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR)** saw a slight increase from 24:1 in 2015 to 26:1 in 2020. Despite efforts to recruit more teachers, the growing enrollment has posed challenges, leading to a higher PTR, which may affect the quality of education if not addressed further.
4. **Gender Parity Index (GPI)** in primary education improved from 0.94 in 2015 to 1.0 in 2020, signifying near-equal participation of boys and girls. This improvement is driven by policies like *Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya*, which encourage girl-child education.

5. **Infrastructure Development** showed progress, with 91% of schools having basic facilities in 2015, increasing to 94% in 2020. Investments in essential infrastructure, such as toilets and drinking water, have greatly improved the learning environment, contributing to better retention rates.
6. **Number of Schools Constructed** increased from 350,000+ in 2015 to over 360,000 by 2020, focusing on underserved rural and urban slum areas. These efforts have expanded access to education across remote regions.
7. **Teacher Training initiatives** trained 3.5 million teachers in 2015 and reached 4 million by 2020, emphasizing the importance of professional development in improving teaching quality. Programs under SSA and the Right to Education (RTE) Act have ensured that teachers are better equipped to handle the diverse needs of students.

regional disparities in educational outcomes persist. Rural and indigenous communities often lack access to adequate educational resources, and quality of education varies significantly between urban and rural areas (World Bank, 2015). Ethiopia has made strides in improving access to primary education, but challenges remain due to limited infrastructure, low teacher quality, and cultural barriers, particularly in rural regions. Gender disparities continue to exist, with girls in remote areas facing significant barriers to continuing their education beyond primary school (UNESCO, 2015). These case studies highlight the ongoing struggles in realizing the Jomtien goals, particularly in addressing inequalities that prevent universal access to quality education.

Salamanca Declaration: The Salamanca Declaration of 1994, endorsed by UNESCO, was a pivotal moment in the global movement for inclusive education.

Table 6. Brazil's Bolsa Familia Program

Sl No.	Indicator	Value	Notes
1	Number of Beneficiaries	13 million families	Covers over 46 million people, including some of Brazil's poorest families.
2	Annual Budget	US\$ 9.5 billion	Approximately 0.5% of Brazil's GDP (2020).
3	Monthly Transfer Amount	R\$ 41 to R\$ 89 (US\$ 8 to US\$ 18)	Depending on family income and the number of children.
4	Poverty Reduction Impact	16% reduction in extreme poverty	Bolsa Família has helped alleviate extreme poverty across Brazil.

Source: <https://www.worldbank.org/>
<https://en.unesco.org/>

Table 7. Global Statistics on Inclusive Education (2023)

Sl No.	Indicator	Global Average	Sub-Saharan Africa	South Asia	Latin America & Caribbean	East Asia & Pacific	Middle East & North Africa
1	Primary School Enrollment Rate (%)	91.0%	78.2%	94.0%	95.1%	97.4%	93.4%
2	Secondary School Enrollment Rate (%)	76.4%	43.2%	67.1%	81.7%	87.3%	72.9%
3	Children with Disabilities Out of School	32 million	11 million	7 million	5 million	6 million	3 million
4	Teachers Trained in Inclusive Education (%)	45%	30%	40%	55%	60%	50%
5	Schools with Accessible Infrastructure (%)	65%	50%	60%	70%	75%	68

Source: <https://www.unesdoc.unesco.org>
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/brief/inclusive-education>
<https://www.unicef.org/education/inclusive-education>

Brazil: Bolsa Familia Program: The Bolsa Familia program, launched in 2003, is Brazil's flagship conditional cash transfer (CCT) initiative designed to reduce poverty and inequality. The program provides financial support to low-income families, particularly those with children, in exchange for fulfilling certain conditions. These include ensuring children's school attendance and participation in health programs, such as vaccinations and pre-natal care.

Features of the Bolsa Familia Program

1. **Targeting the Poor:** The program supports families earning below the poverty line. By 2020, the Bolsa Familia program was reaching over 13 million families, covering approximately 46 million people, making it one of the largest CCT programs globally.
2. **Conditionality:** The transfer is conditional upon families meeting specific education and health-related criteria, aiming to break the cycle of poverty across generations by enhancing human capital.
3. **Poverty Reduction:** Bolsa Família has played a pivotal role in Brazil's reduction of income inequality and poverty. Between 2003 and 2014, the program was credited with contributing to a 20-25% reduction in income inequality and a 16% drop in extreme poverty in Brazil.

The Jomtien Declaration of 1990, which aimed to provide "Education for All," has faced challenges in implementation, particularly in developing countries like India, Brazil, and Ethiopia. In India, disparities in socio-economic status and geographic location have limited access to quality education for marginalized communities, including girls and children in rural areas. Despite programs like *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, the country still grapples with issues like dropout rates and uneven teacher distribution (Govinda & Bandyopadhyay, 2008). In Brazil, while programs like *Bolsa Família* have improved school enrolment among low-income families,

It advocates for the integration of children with special educational needs into mainstream schools, emphasizing that education is a fundamental human right (UNESCO, 1994). With over 300 delegates from 25 international organizations and 92 governments, the Salamanca conference championed the principles of inclusion, respect, and equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of ability. The Declaration continues to shape national educational policies globally, promoting access and equity in education systems (UNESCO, 1994).

Studies from various countries

Spain: Spain, the host of the Salamanca conference, quickly adopted the principles of the Salamanca Declaration by reforming its General Law of Education (1990) to integrate students with special needs into mainstream schools (UNESCO, 1994). Significant investments were made in teacher training and inclusive classrooms, promoting diversity and equipping educators with specialized skills and resources (Arnaiz, 2012). Despite these efforts, inadequate funding and resistance from educators and parents—concerned about the workload and potential impact on other students—hindered full implementation (Fernandez, 2015; Rodriguez, 2013). Further efforts are required to overcome these challenges and realize inclusive education fully.

India: India's inclusive education policy was significantly shaped by the Salamanca Declaration, leading to the enactment of the Persons with Disabilities Act (1995), which ensured that children with disabilities were entitled to education in regular schools (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2001). The Education for All Movement and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) further advanced this goal, funding infrastructure, teacher training, and resources for inclusive education. However, challenges persist, especially in rural areas where schools lack essential accommodations like accessible

restrooms and trained instructors (Sharma & Deppeler, 2005; Singhal, 2019). Socio-cultural barriers also impede progress, with stigmas surrounding disabilities affecting integration (Miles, 2011).

Table 9. Inclusive Education in Spain (2023)

Sl. No	Indicator	Value
1	Primary School Enrollment Rate	99.7%
2	Secondary School Enrollment Rate	91.0%
3	Children with Disabilities in Mainstream Schools	85%
4	Teachers Trained in Inclusive Education	55%
5	Schools with Accessible Infrastructure	70%
6	Student-Teacher Ratio in Inclusive Classrooms	12:1
7	Government Expenditure on Education (% of GDP)	4.0%
8	Funding Gap for Inclusive Education (Estimated)	€2.5 billion

Source: <https://www.unicef.org/education/inclusive-education>
<https://gpseducation.oecd.org/CountryProfile?primaryCountry=ESP&treshold=10&topic=EO>
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/brief/inclusive-education>

Table 10. Inclusive Education in India (2023)

Sl No	Indicator	Value
1	Primary School Enrollment Rate (%)	95.1%
2	Secondary School Enrollment Rate (%)	74.3%
3	Children with Disabilities Out of School	2.9 million
4	Schools with Accessible Infrastructure (%)	67%
5	Teachers Trained in Inclusive Education (%)	35%
6	Dropout Rate of Students with Disabilities	23%
7	Government Spending on Inclusive Education (INR)	6 billion

Source: <https://www.education.gov.in/annual-report-2022-2023-moe-english>
<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/state-education-report-india-2023>
<https://www.unicef.org/india/what-we-do/education>

South Africa: Post-apartheid South Africa adopted the Salamanca Declaration to reform its education system, emphasizing inclusivity. The South African Schools Act (1996) and White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education (2001) laid the foundation for integrating students with special needs into mainstream schools (Department of Basic Education, 2001). However, implementation faces challenges, particularly in rural areas with limited infrastructure, resources, and trained staff (Engelbrecht, 2006). Despite progressive policies, socio-cultural stigmas surrounding disabilities and insufficient teacher training impede the full realization of inclusive education (Walton, 2013; Engelbrecht et al., 2015). Bridging policy and practice remains crucial for success.

Table 11. Inclusive Education in South Africa (2023)

Sl No	Indicator	Value
1	Primary School Attendance Rate (%)	99%
2	Secondary School Attendance Rate (%)	90%
3	Children with Disabilities in Schools (%)	5%
4	Dropout Rate before Matric (%)	25%
5	Early Childhood Development (ECD) Enrollment (%)	33%
6	Teacher Training in Inclusive Education (%)	45%

Source: <https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/education>

Brazil: Since the enactment of the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law in 1996, Brazil has demonstrated a strong commitment to inclusive education by integrating students with special needs into mainstream schools (Brasil, 1996). The 2008 National Policy on Special Education further reinforced these principles, promoting full participation of students with disabilities in all aspects of school life (Ministerio da Educacao, 2008). However, Brazil faces significant challenges, including inadequate funding, limited teacher training, and regional disparities, which hinder the effective implementation of inclusive education, especially in under-resourced areas (Lima & Oliveira, 2017; Souza, 2015). Despite progress, these issues demand urgent attention to fully realize inclusive education.

Table 12. Inclusive Education in Brazil (2023)

SL. No	Indicator	Statistic
1	Primary School Enrollment Rate	96.7%
2	Secondary School Enrollment Rate	73.4%
3	Students with Disabilities in Regular Schools	89%
4	Resource Rooms (Salas de Recursos Multifuncionais)	35,000
5	Teachers Trained in Inclusive Education	52%
6	Schools with Accessible Infrastructure	70%
7	Government Spending on Inclusive Education	\$1.2 billion
8	Regional Disparities in Enrollment (Urban vs. Rural)	15% difference

Source: <https://www.unesco.org/en/node/99493>
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/brief/inclusive-education>

Canada: Canada's commitment to inclusive education, rooted in the Salamanca principles, has been integrated into provincial policies supported by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Porter & Towell, 2017). Provinces like British Columbia and Ontario have invested heavily in teacher training and the use of assistive technologies to support diverse learners in mainstream classrooms (Jordan et al., 2009). However, regional disparities persist due to uneven resource allocation (Hutchinson, 2017). Indigenous communities face additional barriers, including historical trauma and insufficient resources, though efforts are underway to address these challenges (Cherubini et al., 2010; Government of Canada, 2017).

Table 13. Inclusive Education in Canada (2023)

SL. No	Indicator	Value
1	Primary School Enrollment Rate	98%
2	Secondary School Enrollment Rate	95%
3	Children with Disabilities in Mainstream Schools	85%
4	Schools with Accessible Infrastructure	70%
5	Teachers Trained in Inclusive Education	60%
6	Indigenous Students with Access to Inclusive Education	55%
7	Graduation Rate for Students with Disabilities	65%
8	Employment Rate for Persons with Disabilities	59%
9	Poverty Rate for Persons with Disabilities	23%

Source: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/disability-inclusion-action-plan/action-plan-2022.html>
https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/subjects-start/education_training_and_learning

Comparative Analysis of Inclusive Education Policies in Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil, and Canada: The Salamanca Declaration of 1994 catalyzed a global movement toward inclusive education, aiming to integrate children with disabilities into mainstream schools. This analysis examines how five diverse countries—Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil, and Canada—have adopted and implemented inclusive education policies, reflecting on their successes, challenges, and future directions. While all five countries demonstrate a commitment to inclusive education, significant disparities exist in the degree of implementation, funding, infrastructure, and societal acceptance.

Spain: Legislative Foundation and Implementation Barriers: As the host country of the Salamanca conference, Spain was among the first to align its educational policies with the Salamanca principles. The General Law of Education of 1990 marked a pivotal moment by promoting the inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream schools (UNESCO, 1994). Spain made substantial investments in teacher training and inclusive classrooms, with 55% of teachers trained in inclusive education by 2023, according to UNICEF data. Despite these strides, challenges remain. A significant barrier is inadequate funding, which, at only 4.0% of GDP, falls short of addressing the growing needs of inclusive education. Additionally, an estimated €2.5 billion funding gap exacerbates the difficulty of fully implementing inclusive policies (OECD, 2023). Resistance from both educators and parents—often concerned about the increased workload and potential negative impact on non-disabled students—further slows progress (Rodriguez, 2013). While 85% of children with disabilities are enrolled in mainstream schools, Spain still struggles

with the accessibility of its school infrastructure. Only 70% of schools are deemed accessible, which creates a significant hurdle for students with physical disabilities (Arnaiz, 2012). Moreover, Spain's student-teacher ratio in inclusive classrooms, standing at 12:1, is a promising indicator of the quality of personalized attention these students receive. However, for Spain to fully realize its inclusive education goals, a concerted effort is needed to bridge funding gaps, improve infrastructure, and address the concerns of educators and parents.

India: Legislative Milestones Amid Persistent Challenges: India has made notable progress in promoting inclusive education since the adoption of the Persons with Disabilities Act in 1995, which was a direct response to the Salamanca Declaration. This legislative act guarantees that children with disabilities have the right to be educated in regular schools, and this was further bolstered by the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) initiative. However, India faces substantial challenges in implementing inclusive education, particularly in rural areas, where schools often lack accessible infrastructure such as restrooms and classrooms, as well as trained educators (Sharma & Deppeler, 2005). In 2023, only 67% of schools in India reported having accessible infrastructure, while just 35% of teachers were trained in inclusive education, creating a significant gap between policy and practice (UNESCO, 2023). Despite the relatively high primary school enrollment rate of 95.1%, a concerning 2.9 million children with disabilities remain out of school. This highlights the persistence of socio-cultural barriers, particularly in rural and underserved areas where stigmas around disabilities continue to prevent full integration (Singhal, 2019). Furthermore, the dropout rate for students with disabilities, at 23%, underscores the urgent need for more comprehensive support systems, including teacher training, accessible resources, and community outreach programs. India's commitment to inclusive education is further hampered by inadequate funding. With government spending on inclusive education totaling just INR 6 billion, there is a need for increased financial investment to support infrastructure improvements and teacher development programs (Ministry of Education, 2023). While the legislative framework is robust, more attention must be given to addressing regional disparities and socio-cultural attitudes to ensure that all children with disabilities have equal access to education.

South Africa: Policy Reforms Confronting Implementation Gaps: South Africa's journey toward inclusive education has been shaped by its post-apartheid era reforms, which emphasize equality and inclusivity. The South African Schools Act of 1996 and the White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education (2001) provide a comprehensive policy framework to support the integration of students with disabilities into mainstream schools. South Africa has achieved high levels of school attendance, with a 99% primary school attendance rate and a 90% secondary school attendance rate as of 2023 (UNICEF, 2023). However, the percentage of children with disabilities in schools remains alarmingly low, at just 5%, which points to significant challenges in policy implementation (Engelbrecht et al., 2015). One of the primary barriers to inclusive education in South Africa is the lack of infrastructure and resources, particularly in rural areas. Schools in these regions often lack basic facilities, and the availability of trained teachers is limited. Only 45% of teachers are trained in inclusive education, which poses a significant challenge to ensuring that students with special needs receive appropriate support (Walton, 2013). Furthermore, socio-cultural stigmas and historical inequalities continue to hinder the progress of inclusive education, particularly in communities where disabilities are viewed through a lens of exclusion and marginalization. Despite these challenges, South Africa's commitment to inclusive education remains strong. Bridging the gap between policy and practice requires increased investment in infrastructure, teacher training, and community engagement, particularly in rural and underserved areas. More importantly, South Africa must work to combat the deep-rooted societal stigmas that continue to hinder the full realization of inclusive education.

Brazil: Regional Disparities in an Ambitious Framework: Brazil's National Education Guidelines and Framework Law, enacted in 1996,

laid the groundwork for inclusive education by mandating the integration of students with special needs into mainstream schools. This commitment was further reinforced in 2008 with the National Policy on Special Education, which emphasizes the full participation of students with disabilities in all aspects of school life. By 2023, 89% of students with disabilities were enrolled in regular schools, reflecting Brazil's strong commitment to inclusive education (Ministry of Education, 2023). However, regional disparities pose a significant challenge to Brazil's inclusive education goals. Urban areas tend to have better resources, infrastructure, and trained teachers compared to rural regions, where schools often lack the necessary accommodations. The enrollment rate difference between urban and rural areas stands at 15%, highlighting the uneven distribution of resources (Lima & Oliveira, 2017). Moreover, only 52% of teachers are trained in inclusive education, and many schools lack accessible infrastructure, with 70% of schools meeting accessibility standards. Brazil has also invested in the development of specialized resources, such as the creation of 35,000 "salas de recursos multifuncionais" (resource rooms) to support students with disabilities. However, inadequate funding remains a critical issue, with government spending on inclusive education totaling only \$1.2 billion. To fully realize its inclusive education goals, Brazil must address regional disparities by increasing investments in rural areas, improving teacher training, and ensuring that all schools are equipped with the necessary resources and infrastructure.

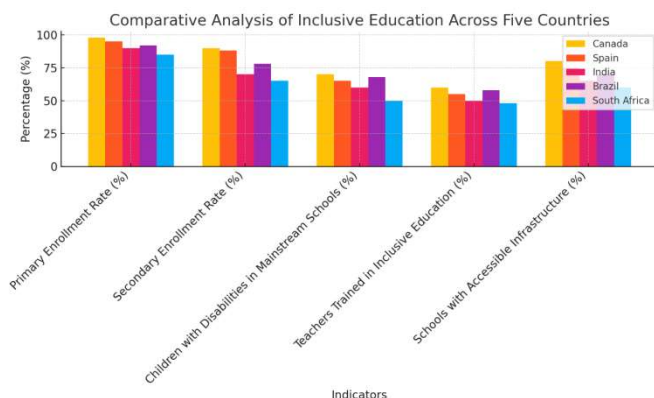
Canada: High Commitment with Regional Disparities: Canada's inclusive education policies are deeply rooted in its national values of equity and social justice, as enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provinces such as British Columbia and Ontario have made significant strides in promoting inclusive education by investing in teacher training and assistive technologies (Jordan et al., 2009). By 2023, 85% of children with disabilities were integrated into mainstream schools, and 60% of teachers were trained in inclusive education (Government of Canada, 2023). However, regional disparities persist, particularly in Indigenous communities, where historical trauma, lack of resources, and systemic marginalization continue to hinder access to inclusive education. Only 55% of Indigenous students have access to inclusive education, highlighting the ongoing inequities in resource allocation and support systems (Cherubini et al., 2010). Moreover, while 70% of Canadian schools have accessible infrastructure, there is still room for improvement, particularly in rural and remote areas. Canada has made considerable progress in supporting students with disabilities, as evidenced by a graduation rate of 65% for these students. However, the employment rate for persons with disabilities remains relatively low, at 59%, and the poverty rate for this group is alarmingly high at 23% (Hutchinson, 2017). These figures underscore the need for a more holistic approach that not only focuses on education but also addresses the broader socio-economic challenges faced by persons with disabilities. The countries examined in this analysis demonstrate a shared commitment to inclusive education, yet their approaches and outcomes vary significantly based on factors such as funding, teacher training, societal attitudes, and infrastructure. Spain and Canada show high levels of integration but face challenges related to funding and regional disparities. India and South Africa, while making legislative strides, continue to grapple with inadequate infrastructure and socio-cultural barriers. Brazil's efforts are hindered by regional disparities and insufficient resources, particularly in rural areas. To fully realize the goals of the Salamanca Declaration, all five countries must continue to invest in inclusive education, with particular attention to addressing regional disparities, improving infrastructure, and combating societal stigmas.

Findings

The comparative analysis of inclusive education across five countries—Canada, Spain, India, South Africa, and Brazil—reveals significant differences in how the Salamanca Declaration has been implemented based on varying socio-economic and educational contexts. Canada and Spain have made notable advancements, driven by strong resource allocation, comprehensive teacher training

programs, and legislative frameworks that promote inclusion. Canada's provincial education policies are supported by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which mandates equitable access for students with disabilities (Porter & Towell, 2017). The country's emphasis on teacher development and the use of assistive technologies has resulted in positive educational outcomes, including improved graduation rates and employment for students with disabilities (Jordan et al., 2009). Similarly, Spain has prioritized inclusive education through investments in teacher training and the establishment of special education units within mainstream schools, though funding limitations have occasionally hindered full implementation (Arnaiz, 2012; Fernandez, 2015). In contrast, India and Brazil face more significant challenges due to limited infrastructure, inadequate funding, and a shortage of trained teachers (Hutchinson, 2017; Sharma, 2010). In India, while the Persons with Disabilities Act and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan have promoted inclusive education, rural areas continue to lag behind due to insufficient resources and socio-cultural barriers (Sharma & Deppeler, 2005).

Similarly, Brazil has made strides through initiatives like the Bolsa Família program and resource rooms (Salas de Recursos Multifuncionais), but persistent issues such as regional disparities and funding gaps continue to obstruct the full realization of inclusive education (Lima & Oliveira, 2017). South Africa presents a unique case, where post-apartheid reforms like the South African Schools Act and White Paper 6 have established a legal framework for inclusive education, but the legacy of socio-economic disparities remains a challenge (Engelbrecht et al., 2015). Rural areas face severe resource limitations, including insufficient infrastructure and trained personnel, making it difficult to implement inclusive education effectively (Ghosh, 2021). Socio-cultural stigmas surrounding disability further complicate the situation (Walton, 2013). Overall, while Canada and Spain have seen positive outcomes due to better resources and policy frameworks, India, Brazil, and South Africa continue to face significant barriers related to funding, teacher training, and socio-cultural factors. However, innovative practices from Spain and Canada, such as Spain's integration of special education units and Canada's emphasis on continuous teacher development, offer valuable lessons for other nations striving to improve inclusive education frameworks. This analysis highlights the need for global cooperation, sustained investment, and tailored strategies to overcome the diverse challenges faced by countries at different stages of development.



Source: Government of Canada, Disability Inclusion Action Plan (2022), Statistics Canada Education Data
 UNICEF Inclusive Education Reports for Spain (2023), OECD Education Profile for Spain (2023)
 Ministry of Education, Government of India Annual Report (2022-2023), UNESCO State of Education Report (2023)
 World Bank Education Brief (2023), UNESCO Inclusive Education Data for Brazil (2023)
 UNICEF South Africa Education Report (2023), Department of Basic Education, South Africa (2023)

Graphical Representation –2 of Inclusive and Universal Education

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of inclusive education policies across Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil, and Canada demonstrates both significant strides and persistent challenges in aligning national education frameworks with the Salamanca Declaration's principles. The Salamanca Declaration, established in 1994, marked a pivotal moment in global educational reform, advocating for the inclusion of children with special needs into mainstream schools and ensuring that education systems adapt to meet diverse learner needs (UNESCO, 1994). While these five countries have embraced the Declaration's ideals, their implementation strategies, outcomes, and obstacles vary considerably due to socio-economic factors, regional disparities, and differing levels of commitment to educational inclusivity. Spain, as the host of the Salamanca Conference, adopted its principles early and integrated inclusive education into its national legislation. However, despite substantial investments in teacher training, with 55% of teachers trained in inclusive education by 2023, Spain faces challenges due to inadequate funding and infrastructural gaps (Arnaiz, 2012). With only 70% of schools fully accessible, there remains a considerable need to enhance physical infrastructure to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities (Fernandez, 2015). Furthermore, a €2.5 billion funding gap exacerbates the slow pace of policy implementation (OECD, 2023). Despite these limitations, Spain's relatively favourable student-teacher ratio of 12:1 in inclusive classrooms and the high enrollment rate of 85% of students with disabilities in mainstream schools are promising indicators of progress (Rodriguez, 2013). India, on the other hand, has implemented various legislative milestones, such as the Persons with Disabilities Act (1995) and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), to promote inclusive education. However, rural schools lag significantly due to infrastructural inadequacies and the shortage of trained teachers—only 35% of Indian teachers have received training in inclusive education as of 2023 (UNESCO, 2023). Although India's primary school enrollment rate is 95.1%, there are still 2.9 million children with disabilities out of school, pointing to persistent socio-cultural barriers and stigmas that hinder full integration (Singhal, 2019). Moreover, with a dropout rate of 23% for students with disabilities, India's inclusive education system requires more comprehensive teacher training programs and infrastructural improvements, particularly in rural and underserved regions (Sharma & Deppeler, 2005).

South Africa's efforts to implement inclusive education are grounded in its post-apartheid reforms, including the South African Schools Act (1996) and White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education (2001), which provide a solid policy foundation (Engelbrecht et al., 2015). Despite this, socio-cultural stigmas surrounding disabilities and resource limitations—particularly in rural areas—continue to impede progress. The stark reality is that only 5% of children with disabilities attend school, reflecting the need for substantial improvements in infrastructure and teacher training, with only 45% of teachers being trained in inclusive education (Walton, 2013). South Africa's socio-economic inequalities, rooted in its apartheid history, further complicate the realization of inclusive education, requiring targeted interventions to bridge these disparities. Brazil's commitment to inclusive education is exemplified by the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (1996) and the National Policy on Special Education (2008), which advocate for the full integration of students with disabilities into mainstream schools (Ministerio da Educacao, 2008). However, regional disparities significantly hinder progress, with rural schools often lacking the necessary resources and trained personnel. Brazil's infrastructure for inclusive education, while developed in urban areas, remains inadequate in rural regions, leading to a 15% enrollment gap between urban and rural students (Lima & Oliveira, 2017). Moreover, only 52% of teachers are trained in inclusive education, and Brazil's spending on inclusive education, at \$1.2 billion, is insufficient to fully address the existing gaps (Souza, 2015). Despite these challenges, the country's resource rooms, known as "salas de recursos multifuncionais," have provided specialized support to many students, highlighting Brazil's innovative

approaches to addressing inclusivity (Ministry of Education, 2023). Canada, with its decentralized education system, has seen notable success in implementing inclusive education, particularly in provinces like British Columbia and Ontario, where substantial investments have been made in teacher training and assistive technologies (Jordan et al., 2009). However, regional disparities persist, particularly within Indigenous communities, where historical trauma and insufficient resources continue to obstruct equitable access to inclusive education (Cherubini et al., 2010). As of 2023, 85% of children with disabilities are enrolled in mainstream schools, and 60% of teachers are trained in inclusive education, demonstrating Canada's strong commitment to inclusivity (Government of Canada, 2017). Nonetheless, the poverty rate for persons with disabilities remains high at 23%, indicating that broader socio-economic support is needed to complement educational reforms (Hutchinson, 2017). In conclusion, while Spain and Canada have made notable advancements in inclusive education through strong legislative frameworks and resource allocation, they face challenges related to funding and regional disparities. India and South Africa, despite making legislative strides, continue to struggle with inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, and socio-cultural barriers that impede the full realization of inclusive education. Brazil's efforts are hindered by regional disparities and insufficient resources, particularly in rural areas. To achieve the goals set forth in the Salamanca Declaration, all five countries must increase investment in inclusive education, enhance teacher training, address infrastructural challenges, and work toward overcoming societal stigmas that continue to marginalize students with disabilities. Collaboration between these nations and global stakeholders is essential to ensure that inclusive education becomes a reality for all children, regardless of their abilities or socio-economic backgrounds.

Educational Significance: The educational significance of this paper in modern-day education lies in its exploration of the global implementation of inclusive education policies, which are crucial in today's increasingly diverse and interconnected world. By examining the outcomes of the Salamanca and Jomtien Declarations across different socio-economic contexts, this study highlights the importance of inclusive education in ensuring equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their physical, intellectual, or socio-economic backgrounds. In an era where equity and accessibility are central to educational reforms, the lessons drawn from Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil, and Canada provide critical insights into the challenges and successes of integrating children with special needs into mainstream education. The paper underscores the need for continuous investment in teacher training, infrastructure development, and societal change to overcome persistent barriers, making it a valuable resource for educators, policymakers, and advocates striving to create more inclusive, supportive, and effective learning environments for all students.

Conflict of Research: The educational significance of this paper in modern-day education lies in its exploration of the global implementation of inclusive education policies, which are crucial in today's increasingly diverse and interconnected world. By examining the outcomes of the Salamanca and Jomtien Declarations across different socio-economic contexts, this study highlights the importance of inclusive education in ensuring equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their physical, intellectual, or socio-economic backgrounds. In an era where equity and accessibility are central to educational reforms, the lessons drawn from Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil, and Canada provide critical insights into the challenges and successes of integrating children with special needs into mainstream education. The paper underscores the need for continuous investment in teacher training, infrastructure development, and societal change to overcome persistent barriers, making it a valuable resource for educators, policymakers, and advocates striving to create more inclusive, supportive, and effective learning environments for all students.

Ethical Considerations: The ethical considerations of this paper stem from its focus on inclusive education, which inherently deals with vulnerable populations such as children with disabilities,

and individuals from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. One primary ethical concern is ensuring that the research respects the dignity and rights of these populations by advocating for policies and practices that enhance their access to education. The study must approach the analysis of national policies with sensitivity, ensuring that any criticisms or shortcomings highlighted do not reinforce existing stigmas or biases against children with disabilities or other marginalized groups. Furthermore, the study needs to remain objective, avoiding any cultural bias in comparing the implementation of inclusive education policies across different countries. The diverse socio-economic contexts of Spain, India, South Africa, Brazil, and Canada mean that what may work in one setting might not be feasible in another due to resource limitations, cultural values, or political structures. It is important for the analysis to respect these differences while advocating for equitable education systems. In terms of research integrity, the use of reliable, current, and ethically sourced data is crucial. The paper draws on reports from credible organizations such as UNESCO, the World Bank, and UNICEF, ensuring that the data is accurate and up to date. Additionally, proper attribution of sources is necessary to maintain academic honesty and avoid plagiarism. Lastly, the ethical imperative to advocate for social justice and equity in education underscores the significance of the paper's conclusions, which aim to influence policymakers to create more inclusive and equitable education systems for all children, regardless of their abilities or socio-economic status.

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