Abstract

Title: Intergenerational perspectives and sustainable inclusive education

To work against exclusion and disrespect for social, civil and educational rights we propose that studies on adult learners, and in particular the parents and guardians of children with disabilities, can address the efforts of both inclusive education and social equity. We argue that there is a tendency to focus on the numbers of children in schools rather than the quality of education and access to society across the lifespan focusing on intergenerational and lifelong learning.

In India there are more than 21 million people with some kind of disability which is about 2% of the country’s population and there is a higher number of individuals with disability in rural areas (censusindia.gov). The types of disabilities which were surveyed are visual (48.5%), mobility (27.9%), cognitive (10.3%) and speech and hearing together as 13.3%. The statistics present a similar picture of the prevalence of disability in children and youth in Nepal (Sauvey, S., Osrin, D., Manandhar, D. S., Costello, A. M., & Wirz, S., 2005). In both cases the information is directly utilized to identify education goals in these countries (Singal, 2009; Maudslay, 2014). The challenges in these efforts are largely due to poverty as is the case in all issues of regarding social and health resources.

Disability such as disabling hearing loss is unequally distributed across the world, where the Southeast Asia region reports 27% as compared with 11% in High Income region countries.
(WHO, 2012). Also presented in this report is the connection to the higher prevalence of disabling hearing loss for children where parents’ literacy rates are lower. Sweden is presented as an example of the highest ranking in respect to social and health measures among six sample countries including Japan, Germany, France, the UK and the USA.

Community learning involves incorporating the experiences of adult learners in their everyday situations. The focus of this study is to include the realities of families of children with disabilities in investigating what facilitates inclusive education in societies. The project involves three socio-cultural contexts and focuses on Sweden, India and Nepal regarding inclusive education and rights of people with disabilities. The methods involving the shareholders in the communities through focus group discussions and qualitative interviews. The theoretical framework builds on a qualitative intersectional approach including gender, disability, and age in respect to social justice education. Expected outcomes of the study will be to organize a conference, provide opportunities for further outreach grounded in the empirical findings. It will also facilitate researchers towards capacity building in the respective communities by strengthening the networking within Scandinavia and the EU towards goals of intergenerational community learning.

Five keys words: lifelong learning, intergenerational community learning, inclusive education, gender, disability

Dr. Liz Adams Lyngbäck and Dr. Khaleda Gani Dutt will be presenting the paper.